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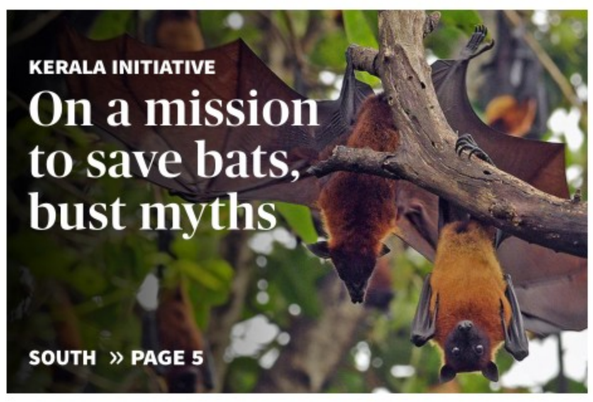
DISCHARGE ORDER REVOKED

SC refers Saibaba case to HC for fresh look

NEWS » PAGE 8



KERALA INITIATIVE

On a mission to save bats, bust myths

SOUTH » PAGE 5

BORDER STAND-OFF

India-China talks will continue, says Rajnath

NEWS » PAGE 8

AMENDED IT RULES

It is a new assault on India's liberty

Regulations take away the right to speak truth

EDITORIAL » PAGE 6

NARROW WIN

Super Giants prevail over Royals by 10 runs

SPORT » PAGE 13

India's population to edge ahead of China's by mid-2023, says UN

India's population projected to reach 142.86 cr. against China's 142.57 cr.; contrary to alarm bells, population trends point to slower growth and ageing societies, says report; family planning targets can lead to gender-based discrimination, it says

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India is set to overtake China to become the world's most populous country by the middle of 2023, according to data released by the United Nations.

India's population is pegged to reach 142.86 crore against China's 142.57 crore. This shows India will have 29 lakh more people than its Asian neighbour.

The United States is a distant third, with an estimated population of 34 crore, the data by the State of World Population Report, 2023 of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) showed. The world's population hit the 800-crore mark in November 2022.

The report says that contrary to the alarm bells about exploding numbers, population trends everywhere point to slower growth and ageing societies. Just eight countries will account for half the projected growth in global population by 2050 – the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania – while two-thirds of people now live in a country where lifetime fertility corresponds with zero growth.

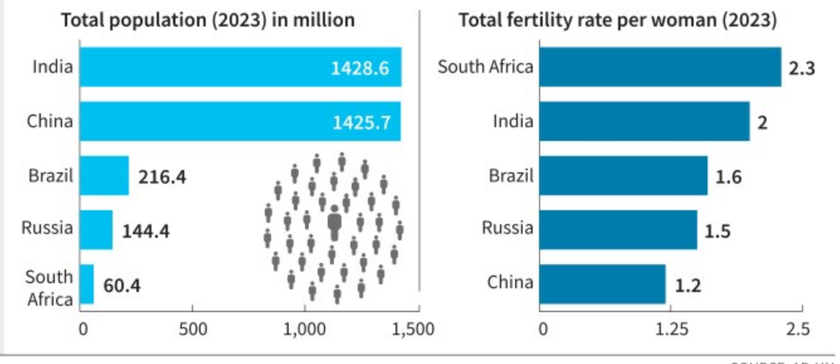
At a time when there have been increasing calls for imposing a two-child norm in India by various political leaders, and some States such as Assam have issued an order in 2021 to bar those with more than two children from government jobs, the UN agency said its findings for India too had suggested that "population anxieties have seeped into large portions of the general public".

It called for a radical rethink on how countries address changing demographies and cautioned against use of family planning as a tool for achieving fertility targets. Global experience showed that family planning targets can lead to gender-based discrimination and harmful practices such as prenatal sex determination leading to sex-selective abortion, it says.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

Rising strength

The United Nations said in a report that India will have about 2.9 million people more than China in the middle of 2023. India was not expected to become the most populous nation until later this decade. But it happened quickly due to a drop in China's fertility rate. Among BRICS nations, India has the second highest total fertility rate of 2 while that of China's is the least at 1.2



SOURCE: AP, UN

Have informed States of same-sex marriage hearing, govt. tells SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday informed the Supreme Court that it has written to the Chief Secretaries of the States, informing them that the same-sex marriage case is being heard by the Supreme Court.

The move to inform the States is despite the Supreme Court having already made it clear on Tuesday that it would not venture into the realm of personal laws of various religions. The court had decided to restrict itself to examining whether the ambit of the Special Marriage Act could be widened to include same-sex marriages.

The petitioners had agreed with the court for the adjudication of the issue in an "incremental manner" and to confine the contours of their submissions to the 1954 Act. They had made it clear to the court that they do not want to touch upon the realm of personal laws, thus obviating the need to involve the States in the case.

As of now, only two States, including Madhya Pradesh, have entered appearance. The case may take a longer turn if more and more States enter appearance.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 8

'Individuals have no control over their orientation'

Sexual orientation is an innate characteristic over which individuals have no control and hence the State cannot discriminate against them, Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, heading the Constitution Bench, remarked. » PAGE 8

NEARBY

Bhavani, Revanna extend support to Swaroop

SHIVAMOGGA
JD(S) leader H.D. Revanna, his wife, Bhavani Revanna, and Lok Sabha member Prajwal Revanna have announced their support for H.P. Swaroop, party's candidate in Hassan. » Page 4

Ayanur gets JD(S) ticket

BENGALURU
Hours after senior BJP leader Ayanur Manjunath announced his exit from the saffron party and resigned from membership of the Legislative Council, the Janata Dal (Secular) announced him as its nominee from Shivamogga City constituency. » Page 4

BJP denies ticket to Eshwarappa's son

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Congress changes candidate against CM; refuses ticket to Akhanda

A day before the deadline for filing nomination papers, the Congress and the BJP released another list of candidates.

While the ruling BJP denied the ticket to the son of its senior leader K.S. Eshwarappa, who obeyed the party's instructions to retire from electoral politics, the Congress changed its candidate for the Shiggaon constituency in Haveri district and fielded Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan against Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

Mr. Pathan, the local Congress leader, replaced Mohammed Yousuf Savanur, who is the president of Anjuman-e-Islam Hubballi-Dharwad. The candidate was changed following opposition to fielding an "outsider", sources in the party told *The Hindu*.

Hopes dashed

Mr. Eshwarappa, who announced retirement from electoral politics within minutes of receiving instructions from the party high command, was hoping that his son Kanthesh may get the BJP ticket from Shivamogga City, which is presently being represented by him in the Assembly. The party has given the ticket to Channabasappa.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 5

I-T officials search premises of KGF Babu

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Income Tax Department on Wednesday searched the premises belonging to Congress leader Yusuf Sharif alias KGF Babu whose wife has filed nomination from the Chickpet Assembly constituency as an Independent.

It is learnt that about 5,000 saris meant for distribution among voters besides a large number of demand drafts were seized by the I-T sleuths from his residence at Vasanthnagar here.

Richest candidate

Incidentally, Mr. Babu's wife, Shazia Tarannum, declared assets worth ₹1,743 crore in the affidavit filed along with her nomination papers recently, thus becoming the richest candidate in the fray currently.

While Mr. Babu was an aspirant of the ticket himself and had been actively involved in election preparation to contest from Chickpet, he later fielded his wife as an Independent. BJP legislator Uday Garudachar currently represents Chickpet and he has been renominated by the party. The Congress has fielded R.V. Devaraj as its nominee.

Mr. Babu, who had contested on the Congress ticket in the election to the Legislative Council from the Local Authorities constituency in Bengaluru in December 2021, had then become the richest candidate with total assets worth ₹1,743 crore.

Centre asks States to enforce new rules to check stray dog numbers

A.M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

As stray dog attacks increase, the Centre has decided to reach out to the States, local self-governments (LSGs) and resident welfare associations (RWAs) on implementing the new set of Animal Birth Control Rules prepared by the Animal Husbandry Ministry recently.

Notified on March 10, the rules put the onus of maintaining and controlling the population of stray dogs on LSGs and RWAs.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Secretary of Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) S.K. Dutta said the Rules of 2001, based on the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, were amended to "adopt humane procedures for controlling stray animal population through open methods of surgeries and operations".

Local bodies have been tasked with sterilisation, immunisation of stray dogs. S.S. KUMAR

The decision is also based on several Supreme Court judgments, Dr. Dutta said. "Local bodies were not following the 2001 Rules. We got a number of complaints on cruelty to animals. The Ministry, in consultation with AWBI, revised the rules," he said. The Ministry has requested all Chief Secretaries and State government departments to ensure proper implementation of the new rules. "It is the duty of the local authorities to control the population of stray animals. They will be held responsible for any violation and animal-human conflicts," Dr. Dutta said.

The rules also suggest euthanasia for "incurably ill and mortally wounded dogs" under expert guidance.

SC Collegium recalls Orissa CJ's transfer proposal

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud on Wednesday recalled its recommendation to transfer Orissa High Court Chief Justice, S. Muralidhar, as Chief Justice of the Madras High Court.

The decision comes after a nearly two-year wait for the government to respond. The Collegium had recommended Justice Muralidhar's transfer on September 28, 2022.

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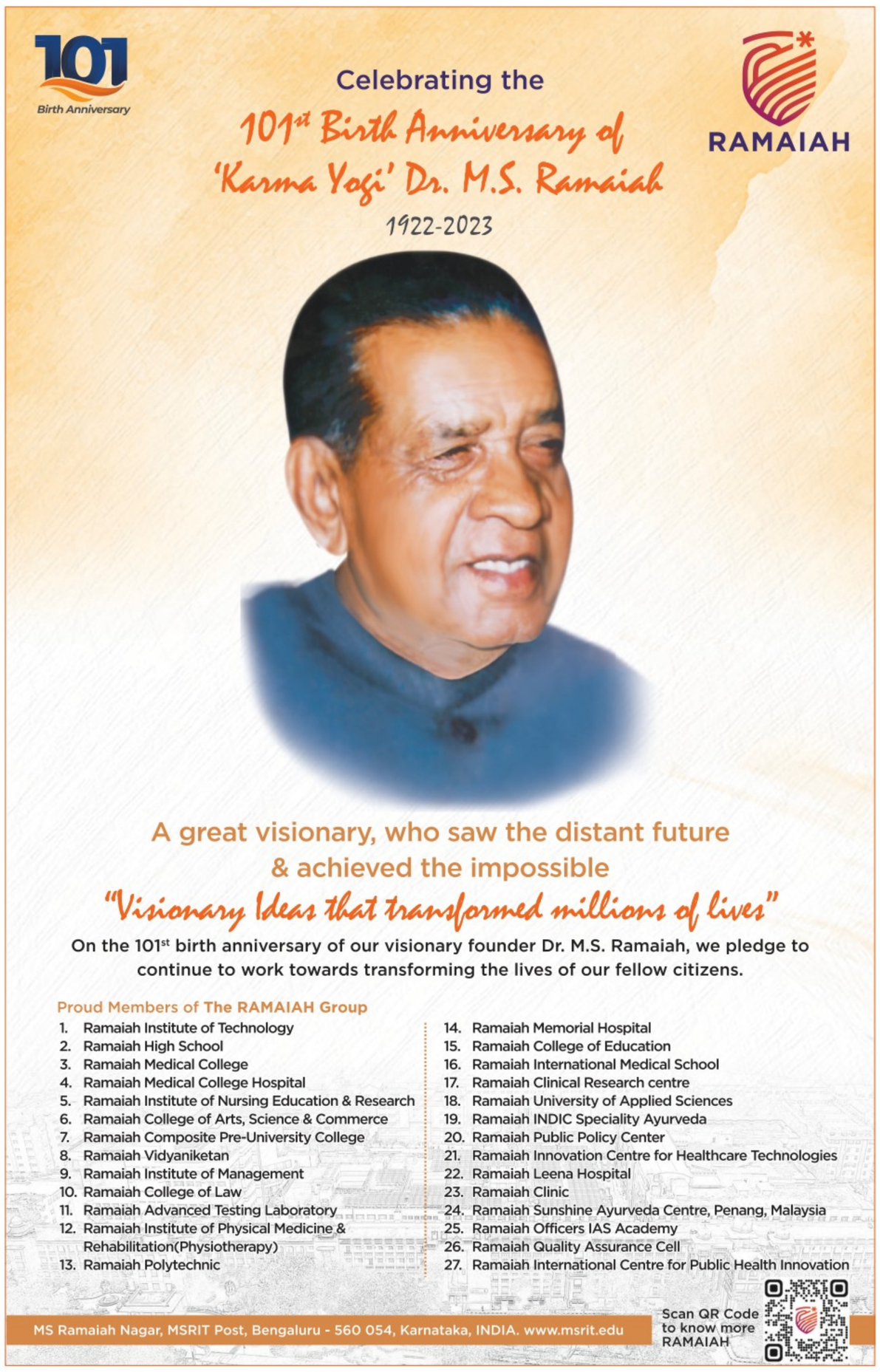
101 Birth Anniversary
RAMAIAH
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101st Birth Anniversary of
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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Road Ministry to construct highways in FY24: MoRTH

12,500 kms. The Secretary of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), Alka Upadhyaya, informed that the Ministry plans to maintain the pace of highway development across India. PTI

The films at the first international film festival in Delhi

200 films. The festival organised by the Delhi government and scheduled from August 17 to 25, will screen films and documentaries of all genres except those that "disrespect our nation", according to officials. PTI

Cost to modernise power supply in Hamirpur, Himachal

156 crores. The Himachal Pradesh Power Board said that the funds would be spent on construction of new sub-stations and modernising transformers. The superintending engineer said that this will end power supply related problems. PTI

The number of years it took Nagaland to get its first medical college

60 years. Informing that the State got approval from the National Medical Commission, Medical Assessment & Rating Board, Health Minister P. Paiwang Konyak said that the college will begin with 100 students from the 2023-24 session. PTI

Federal workers start one of the largest strikes in Canada

1.5 In lakh workers. The Public Service Alliance of Canada said that the strike was called after talks with the government failed to produce an agreement on wage issues. The strike comes as tax returns are due. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The price of a lie: the Fox News settlement

Why did the U.S.-based conservative news channel opt to settle with election technology firm Dominion Voting Systems? What are the other lawsuits against Fox News? What were the claims brought against the broadcaster by the firm and how did they impact the 2020 U.S. elections?

EXPLAINER

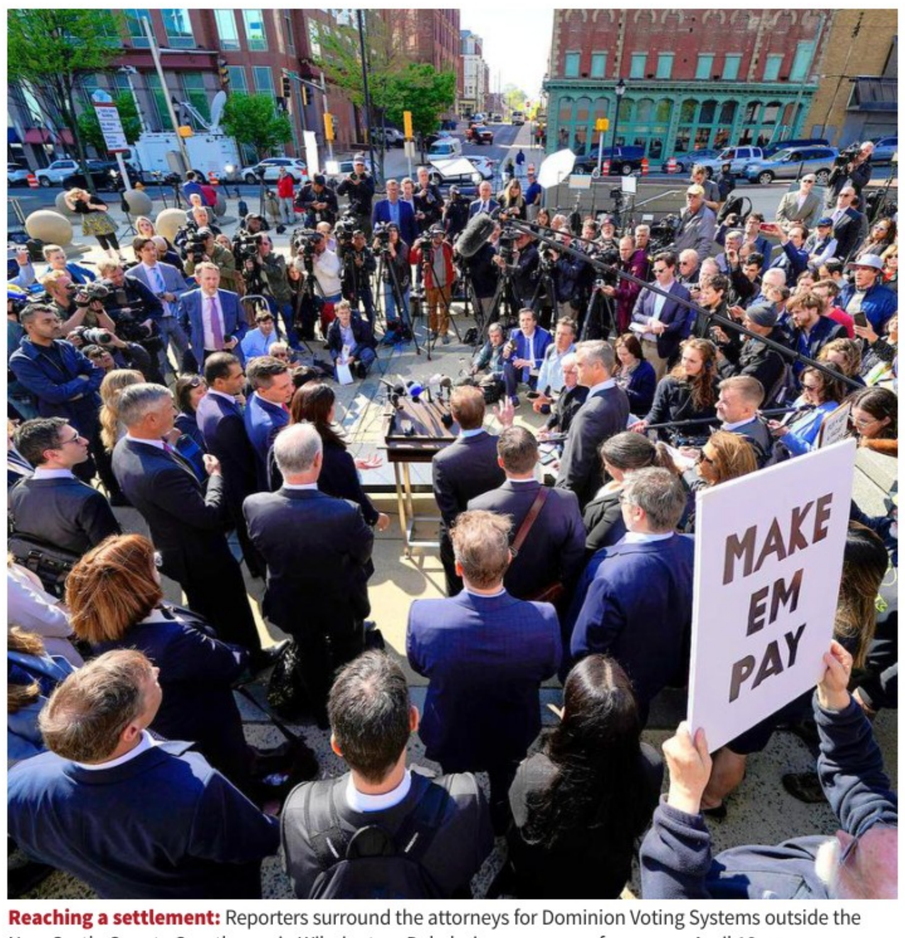
Narayan Lakshman

The story so far:
Fox News, the U.S.-based conservative news channel, has agreed at the 11th hour before trial began, to pay $787.5 million to settle claims brought by election technology firm Dominion Voting Systems. The firm accused the broadcaster of knowingly spreading false information about the company after the 2020 election, to support propaganda that the election was stolen from former President Donald Trump in favour of the current President Joe Biden. There are several other lawsuits that Fox News faces, relating to falsehoods propagated about the 2020 presidential election, which could be equally damaging to the news channel, and which now stand on firmer ground in light of the Dominion settlement.

What are claims against Fox News?
The actual settlement agreed between Fox News and Dominion is a little less than half of the amount originally claimed by Dominion, which was $1.6 billion. It claimed this amount on account of its allegation that Fox News and its parent company, Rupert Murdoch-owned Fox Corporation, caused damage to the voting company's business and threatened its staff by implicating them in a false conspiracy about rigged elections designed to sabotage the prospects of Mr. Trump entering the White House.

The Dominion lawsuit claims that during the weeks following the election day in 2020, leading Fox News anchors engaged on their shows with Trump allies who falsely claimed that Dominion's voting machines had been deliberately programmed to deduct votes away from Mr. Trump and, in parallel, boost the numbers under Mr. Biden's column.

Why did Fox News opt to settle?
Fox News has not made any public comments on the settlement other than to say, "We acknowledge the Court's rulings finding certain claims about Dominion to be false," and that the settlement "reflects Fox's continued commitment to the highest journalistic standards."



Reaching a settlement: Reporters surround the attorneys for Dominion Voting Systems outside the New Castle County Courthouse in Wilmington, Del. during a news conference on April 18. AP

However, it is likely that if the case had gone to trial before a jury, it would have exposed the inner workings of the network to even more scrutiny. In forcing a level of accountability at Fox News, a trial would have turned the spotlight on the channel's senior-most anchors including the likes of Tucker Carlson and Sean Hannity, and grilled them with hard questions on why they opted to spread lies about the election that they likely did not believe themselves.

Yet the strongest factor, likely to have made a settlement appear to be the best option for Fox News, is the fact that Dominion had managed to gather an extraordinary amount of evidence in terms of internal documents of the media house. The documents showed not only widespread organisational dysfunction but also clear proof that many insiders at Fox News knew that the Dominion election conspiracy theory was complete fiction and had no basis in reality. Reports suggest that the documentary evidence in this regard pointed to Fox News' highest ranks including Mr. Murdoch. In terms of U.S. law, the strength of this evidence is said to have given the Dominion lawsuit sufficient ammunition to cross, according to reports, the "legal threshold in defamation cases known as 'actual malice' – established when defamatory statements are 'made with knowledge of its falsity or with reckless disregard of whether it was true or not.'"

What are the broader implications?
In a sense the Dominion settlement reflects the limits of the First Amendment of the U.S. constitution. As the discussion around the concept of 'actual malice' shows, there is a high standard of proof under U.S. law required to establish defamation. Indeed, Fox News said earlier that "Dominion's lawsuit is a political crusade in search of a financial windfall, but the real cost would be cherished First Amendment rights."

However, the point is that it was the very same lies about the "stolen election" that made it possible for Mr. Trump and his associates to play a role in fuelling the January 6, 2021, riots leading to the assault of the Capitol buildings in Washington.

In that context, had the propagandistic messaging of Fox News remained unchecked it would likely presage an even more drastic return to the sort of yellow journalism seen in the late 19th century, such as the Hearst newspapers that is said to have egged on the Spanish-American war in the 1890s.

The settlement with Dominion is also likely to have a strong bearing on several other lawsuits that Fox News is facing for the same reasons – spreading election related falsehoods designed to aid Mr. Trump's cause.

Among these is a case brought by Smartmatic, another election technology company, which has filed a $2.7 billion defamation lawsuit against Fox News; and a case brought by a former Fox News producer, Abby Grossberg, saying that Fox's lawyers pushed her to "give a misleading deposition in the Dominion case and alleging a hostile and discriminatory work environment"

THE GIST

- Fox News, the U.S.-based conservative news channel, has agreed, before trial began, to pay $787.5 million to settle claims brought by election technology firm Dominion Voting Systems.
- The election voting firm has alleged that Fox News and its parent company, Rupert Murdoch-owned Fox Corporation, caused damage to the voting company's business and threatened its staff by implicating them in a false conspiracy about rigged elections designed to sabotage the prospects of Mr. Trump entering the White House.
- If the case had gone to trial before a jury, it would have exposed the inner workings of the broadcast network to even more scrutiny.

Why is a star-planet pair emitting radio signals?

What is YZ Ceti b? How have astronomers detected radio signals from this planet which is 12 light years away?

Prakash Chandra

The story so far:
An alien world called YZ Ceti b has suddenly become the cynosure of astronomers. YZ Ceti b is a rocky, earth-sized exoplanet rotating around a small red dwarf star, YZ Ceti, barely 12 light-years from Earth. Astronomers have detected a repeating radio signal from this exoplanet, suggesting the presence of a magnetic field – one of the prerequisites for a habitable planet – around it.

How was the discovery made?
The discovery was made by Jackie Villadsen from Bucknell University, Pennsylvania, and Sebastian Pineda from the University of Colorado, Boulder, using the Karl G. Jansky Very Large Array radio telescope in New Mexico. They published their findings in the journal *Nature Astronomy* on April 3.

They had to make multiple observations before they could detect the radio signals from the star YZ Ceti, which seemed to match the orbital period of the planet YZ Ceti b. From this, they deduced that the signals were a result of the interaction between the planet's magnetic field and the star.

Why does the magnetic field matter?
Just as energy surges from the sun sometimes disrupt telecommunications on earth and damage orbiting satellites, intense bursts of energy from the YZ Ceti star-exoplanet exchange produce spectacular auroral lights. "We get to see this indirectly in the form of the radio emission we receive," Dr. Pineda said.

These radio waves, strong enough to be picked up on earth, confirmed the existence of an exoplanetary magnetic field. Such signals can only be produced if the exoplanet orbits very close to its parent star and has its own magnetic field to influence the stellar wind and generate the signals.

What does this mean for YZ Ceti b?
YZ Ceti b has a small orbit – astronomers determined that the planet takes just a couple of earth-days to circle its star. Since the mid-1990s, astronomers have found hundreds of planets orbiting stars similar to the sun. To have an atmosphere and sustain water, a planet has to be at a certain distance from its star (in orbits said to be in the star's "Goldilocks zone"), or it will get burnt. Earth, for example, would have been a lot more like Venus if it had been just a little closer to the sun or cold like Mars if it had been any farther. Astronomers believe nearly 30% of all star systems discovered could potentially have "Goldilocks zones".

How common are such magnetic fields?
With such overwhelming numbers, it always stood to reason that strong planetary magnetic fields should be common outside the solar system. Nevertheless, despite many of the larger exoplanets detected being found to possess magnetic fields, planetary scientists have never been able to identify such fields on smaller, rocky exoplanets – until now. Dr. Pineda said that if the latest findings are confirmed by further research, they will confirm their method's ability to lead to the "magnetic characterisation of exoplanets". This is important because the survival of a planet's atmosphere may well depend on its having, or not having, a strong magnetic field, since the field protects its atmosphere from being eroded by the charged particles from its star.

What happens next?
Curiously, Mars orbiting the sun at a 'safe' distance has a similar story to tell. Both Mars and Earth were very much alike billions of years ago, with a lot of water and similar atmospheric systems. But in spite of this, life started on one planet while the other became cold as the solar winds stripped it of most of its atmosphere. Will the story of YZ Ceti b be the same? "We are hoping to get additional observations on this target," Dr. Pinade said. "Longer-term monitoring is important to confirm these results and further investigate the properties of the radio signals." But one thing is certain: these findings will help astronomers learn more about rocky worlds in the deepest reaches of space running rings around their parent stars.

Prakash Chandra is a science writer.

THE GIST

- YZ Ceti b is a rocky, earth-sized exoplanet rotating around a small red dwarf star, YZ Ceti, barely 12 light-years from Earth.
- Astronomers deduced that the radio signals detected were a result of the interaction between the planet's magnetic field and the star.
- Such signals can only be produced if the exoplanet orbits very close to its parent star and has its own magnetic field to influence the stellar wind and generate the signals.

Polls are back, but no end to white-topping mess

According to the Karnataka government, white-topping is a solution to ensure longevity of the city's roads, but experts and citizens seem to disagree

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

The State is gearing up for a new government, but for residents and motorists in many parts of the city, it is their same old struggle with road closures and deviations to facilitate the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) project of white-topping the city roads. Apart from creating a traffic mess, the project has also been a political subject every election.

The BBMP every year allots crores of funds to lay concrete roads, a project that started in 2017 under the then Congress government led by Siddaramaiah.

According to the government, white-topping was a solution to ensure longevity of the city's roads, but experts and citizens seem to disagree.

The BBMP had taken up white-topping work under the Chief Minister Nagarothana scheme. The white-topping project received ₹800 crore in 2016-17 for the development of 29 roads (93.47km), ₹690 crore in 2017-18 for the development of 41 roads (63.26 km), and ₹1,139 crore in 2018-19 for development of 89 roads (123 km).

Development works in progress on Basavanagudi main road in Bengaluru. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

ELECTIONS 2023: FOCUS BENGALURU

Probe report not out

The BJP government, which came to power in 2019 led by then Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, had ordered a probe into white-topping and TenderSure projects in the city, undertaken by the previous Congress, and the JD(S) and Congress coalition governments. However, the probe report has not been released into the public domain so far and no action has been taken. Ironically, the present BJP government continued the project, amid opposition from party members.

A senior BBMP official told *The Hindu*, "The probe report was submitted to the State government by the probe team, which was headed by retired PWD Chief Engineer Capt. R.R. Doddihal. However, the report never came out nor was any action taken".

White-topping project

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
31 roads	38 roads	89 roads
96.56 km	50.47 km	121.7 km
₹972.68 crore	₹756.58 crore	₹1,429 crore

BJP continues project

In March 2022, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai informed the Legislative Council the State government will review the white-topping of roads in the State and introduce norms for it owing to the high cost of the process.

"If normal asphalting costs ₹75 lakh to ₹1 crore for a kilometre, white-topping costs ₹9 crore to ₹10 crore for the same length. The government will relook into white-topping due to the high cost though the maintenance of the white-topped roads is low," the Chief Minister had said, responding to a question from Congress member S. Ravi.

By June 2022, the third phase of the white-topping project was approved by the Chief Minister. Mr. Bommai approved the project estimated to cost ₹1,154 crore which will cover 121.70 kilometres of 89 roads.

Special infrastructure projects grants

In this year's Budget, the government earmarked ₹1,000 crore for white-topping 150 km of roads in the city, and the BBMP will fund ₹410 crore for the project.

The BBMP is undertaking white-topping on select roads under special infrastructure projects grants. The civic body in its project documents claims that the asphalted or blacktopped roads found commonly in the city have an expected life span of five years.

"The arterial roads maintained by BBMP were in need of maintenance/ rehabilitation due to wear and tear from heavy traffic during peak hours. Also, drainage is also the major cause of concern in the rainy season, which is affecting the life of pavement in terms of structural failure. Hence, in order to overcome the failure, white topping is the suitable proposal without disturbing the overall pavement structure. Hence, to prevent the formation of potholes and to provide roads offering better rideability, major roads need to be white-topped. The white-topped roads are expected to last up to 15-20 years," reads a BBMP document on white-topping projects.

The BBMP has completed the phase one project of white-topping, but the second and third phases are yet to be completed, according to BBMP officials.

Rapid road failure

As elections neared and the project, which had aimed to benefit road users, came under severe criticism for creating a problem for motorists by way of delay in completion of work and traffic diversions, the BBMP tried out another way to complete the road concretisation work soon by adopting the 'rapid road' technology by using precast technology.

More hurdles

As an experiment, a 375-metre stretch was laid on Old Madras Road (OMR) with rapid road technology. In this method, precast slabs are prepared, joined, strengthened and then laid. While this project too suffered the problem of missed deadlines, within a month, road developed cracks, the prompting the BBMP to not go ahead with the rapid road technology on other roads as the project costs more than white-topping.

(In this series, we look at the major infrastructural issues affecting the city and how recent governments have dealt with them.)

HC quashes rule empowering revenue authorities to permit delayed registration of births and deaths

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has said that the recent amendment made to the Karnataka Registration of Births and Deaths Rules, 1970, which empowered the revenue authorities to pass orders to permit registration of births and deaths if not registered within a year of occurence, would amount to "permitting the tail to wag the dog" if the amendments are not obliterated.

Quashing the July 18, 2022, notification issued by the State government amending the rules, the court said that amendment made amounts to tinkering with the very mandate of Section 13 of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969, through the power of the State to make rules under the Act.

Justice M. Nagaprasanna passed the order while allowing a petition filed by Sudarshan V. Biradar, a Kalaburagi-based advocate, president of Chincholi Bar Association.

The petitioner had questioned the legality of the amendment, which empowered an 'Assistant Commissioner (Sub-Divisional Magistrate)' under the Revenue Department to pass orders on delayed registration of births and deaths, which are not registered within one year. Earlier, this power was vested with 'a Magistrate of First Class or a Presidency Magistrate.'

On analysing the provisions of the Act, the court found that Section 13 (3) of the Act itself mandates that any birth or death which has not been registered within one year of its occurrence shall be registered only on an order made by "a Magistrate of the First Class or a Presidency Magistrate after verifying the correctness of the birth or death."

'Judicial power'

Therefore, it is the 'judicial power' conferred upon the Magistrate of First Class under the Act and such registration on delay can be only on an order made by such Magistrate, the court said while clarifying that the power conferred under the Act is 'neither quasi judicial nor administrative.'

"If Section 13 of the Act confers certain judicial power upon a Magistrate of First Class, it is trite that the rules cannot take it away by deviating from what is mandated under the Act," the Court said, while holding the amendment made by the Government is illegal as it is contrary to the mandate of the Act.

ASHAs await a ray of hope for better pay, safety measures

PAVANA J.
BENGALURU

A file photo of members of the ASHA Karyartheyara Sangha staging a protest in Bengaluru.

Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), who play a vital role in various State programmes, including healthcare and elections, are demanding better pay and increased safety measures. The workers insist that their various safety and security concerns be addressed by different parties in their manifesto, in addition to a salary hike.

In Karnataka, there are approximately 42,000 ASHAs and currently receive a salary of ₹6,000, with additional incentives based on their monthly performance.

C.P. Veena, who has been working as an ASHA from Nelamangala for the last 13 years, expressed disappointment with previous governments, stating that despite many attempts, they had turned a blind eye to their needs and demands. "We have been protesting ever so often for the government to increase our salary, but they never seem to listen," she said.

Ms. Veena also said there is an urgent need for the government to provide ASHAs with insurance, because though they work primarily in healthcare programmes, they do not have health insurance themselves. ASHAs are paid incentives of ₹150-200 for each activity they perform. Farheena, an ASHA from Kamalanagar, said that they have been asking the government to increase their salary to ₹21,000 per month. "Even with the incentives, we get paid only around ₹7,000, which is not sufficient to run a household," she said. She further said that she wants the government to identify ASHAs as government employees and provide them with pension. "If we have to leave the job under any circumstances at old age, we want the government to provide us with PF," she said.

Karnataka Votes 2023

Farheena, a single parent, said it gets very difficult when they are not paid on time. "They hadn't paid us since November last year, so we decided not to work as a protest in March. That is when they paid us our salary for two months. The remaining still hasn't been paid," she alleged.

ASHAs have yet another demand from the government, and that is for fewer working hours. "We can be called into work at any time. We need to be mentally prepared 24/7; we never know when an emergency might come. It becomes very inconvenient for us," said Chaitra, an ASHA from Rajajinagar.

D. Nagalakshmi, State general secretary of Karnataka Rajya Samyuktha Asha Karyakarthara Sangha, stated that appreciation alone is not enough. "What is the point of all these awards and appreciation when our basic needs are not met?" she asked. Ms. Nagalakshmi said ASHAs have fearlessly served not just during the pandemic, but also in other times. "We are the connection between the government and the grassroots levels of society," she said.

(This concludes the series on what people from different sectors want.)

Hybrid solar eclipse on April 20 to last over 5 hours

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A hybrid solar eclipse will take place on April 20 lasting about 5 hours and 25 minutes.

The eclipse would start at 7.04 a.m. and end at 12.29 p.m. It will be visible in East and South-East Asia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Australia, among other countries, but will not be visible in India.

There are different types of eclipses - total, annular, hybrid and partial. "A hybrid eclipse is a very interesting one. As the shadow of the moon travels over the earth, an annular or total eclipse is seen. The reason is a slight mismatch of the angular size of the moon and the sun. It is annular where the moon fails to cover the sun completely. This time, the shadow of the moon falls mostly over the sea - starting over the Indian Ocean and ending over the Pacific Ocean in between, it falls over small areas of land," said R.C. Kapoor, who was formerly with the Indian Institute of Astrophysics.

Mr. Kapoor said that the popular places to catch the eclipse are Exmouth and Ningaloo in Western Australia.

"The other places are in Timor Leste and Papua West. The longest duration of totality is 76 seconds. Still there is a mad rush to make it to those places," Mr. Kapoor said.

He added that it is not safe to look at the sun during the eclipse.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, APR. 20	
RISE	06:05 SET 18:33
RISE	06:03 SET 18:49
FRIDAY, APR. 21	
RISE	06:04 SET 18:33
RISE	06:46 SET 19:44
SATURDAY, APR. 22	
RISE	06:04 SET 18:33
RISE	07:31 SET 20:40

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	34	25
Mysuru	36	24
Bengaluru	36	22

Bengaluru Today
36°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be very warm and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
36°C A dry weather to continue. Morning will be pleasant with mist & haze. Day will be very warm and uneasy. Night also will be pleasant.

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THE HINDU
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High Court launches webpage for judgments translated into Kannada

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Wednesday launched a webpage of its judgments and the judgments of the Supreme Court translated into Kannada from English, so as to give access to the judgments in the regional language to the public in general and the litigants in particular.

Chief Justice Prasanna B. Varale launched the webpage, containing 169 select verdicts of the High Court and 38 select judgments of the apex court translated into Kannada as a beginning of the outreach programme. The translated judgements can be accessed by visiting the 'judgments' link on the High Court's website - https://karnatakajudiciary. kar.nic.in/.

"The translation project is envisaged to translate selected judgments of the Supreme Court and the High Court to improve access to justice for all by reaching general public in the language known to them and to overcome the language barrier in understanding constitutional courts' judgments, which are in English," said N.G. Dinesh, Registrar (Computers) of the High Court.

This project contemplates Artificial Intelligence (AI)-assisted translation of judicial records and judgments through the 'Supreme Court Vidhik Anuvaad Software (SUVAS), a machine assisted translation tool trained by AI.

The implementation of the citizen-centric project is being implemented at the national level through an advisory committee set up by the apex court comprising Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka, a judge of the Supreme Court and who is also a former Chief Justice of High Court, and Justice Suraj Govindaraj, a judge of the High Court. At the State level, the High Court has set up a committee comprising Justice Krishna S. Dixit and Justice C.M. Joshi, judges of the High Court, to accomplish task of translation.

In-house translators

The translations are being done using the SUVAS tool by High Court's in-house translators, who verify correctness of translation done by the machine and edit the mistakes, said Mr. Dinesh, while pointing out that one of the aims of translating judgments into Kannada is to give legal literacy to the general public as they can understand the law through the judgments.

However, it has been clarified on the page, as a declaimer, that though reasonable efforts have been made to provide accurate translation, the translated judgments are provided only for general information and will have no legal effects for compliance and enforcement.

Police act swiftly, rescue baby stolen from Vani Vilas Hospital

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The V.V. Puram police rescued an eight-day-old baby boy within 72 hours of being kidnapped from Vani Vilas Hospital on Saturday.

According to the police, the accused, Divya Rashmi, 29, had an abortion and desperately wanted a baby. She decided to steal a baby from a hospital and went around Victoria Hospital, KIMS, KC General Hospital, Bowring Hospital, and Rajiv Gandhi Hospital, before going to Vani Vilas Hospital where the victim Suma H.K. was sleeping with her newborn.

Suma, a resident of Tiptur, was admitted to hospital for delivery on April 7. The doctor had asked Suma to stay for two more days as she was anaemic and needed treatment. While she and the baby were sleeping, the accused ventured into the hospital, picked up the baby and vanished.

Based on the complaint, a team of police analysed around 600 CCTV footage starting from Vani Vilas till Ramanagara before arresting the accused Divya Rashmi and charging her under kidnapping. The police rescued the baby and reunited him with the mother. P. Krishnakant, DCP, South Division lauded the team for cracking the case in record time.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

GETTY IMAGES

Why are sensitivity readers looking at old books through a modern lens?

Will it be better to leave the stories and novels of writers like Agatha Christie, Ian Fleming, Arthur Conan Doyle, Hergé and Roald Dahl with their regressive views as they are to give the reader a sense of the time in which they were written and published?

Mini Anthikad Chhibber

The news of Agatha Christie's novels being revised by sensitivity readers is distressing to put it mildly. Following hot on the heels of the reworking of Roald Dahl, Ian Fleming and most recently PG Wodehouse (what ho!), the works of the queen of crime being put through a 21st century prism is self-defeating.

Filtering words

The title of Christie's 1939 novel, *And Then There Were None*, was changed in the 1940 U.S. edition for containing a racial slur. The rhyme, which forms a pivotal plot point, was also changed accordingly. John le Carré's critically acclaimed 1963 spy thriller, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, however, features the original rhyme and also identifies Liz Gold whose features "hesitate between plainness and beauty" as Jewish.

Though Christie's novel did not suffer with the changes, the same cannot be said about the new revisions. In her 1937 novel, *Death on the Nile*, Mrs Allerton's rant about the children, "they come back and stare, and stare, and their eyes are simply disgusting, and so are their noses, and I don't believe I really like children" has been changed to "They come back and stare, and stare. And I don't believe I really like children."

In an interview (on the reprinting of 25 Agatha Christie novels with facsimiles of their original covers, David Brawn, Publisher Estates (HarperCollins U.K.) said, "Christie often projects racist attitudes on to her characters for dramatic effect, as a way of making them appear more unsavoury." Mrs. Allerton, who till then seems not so bad, comes across as quite the nasty little lady after her comment on the children.

While Miss Marple is the definitive proper English lady, in Hercule Poirot, Christie has created the ultimate outsider, who plays on the insular English and their distrust of "foreigners" for his own gains. If at all anything has to be changed in a Christie novel, it should be in the 1971 Miss Marple mystery, *Nemesis*, and its problematic views on rape. One cannot imagine Professor Wanstead's "Girls are far more ready to be raped nowadays" being okay in any era.

Incidentally, though Fleming's James Bond novels have some racist descriptions excised, others including the reference to Koreans in *Goldfinger* (1959) and Japanese in *You Only Live Twice* (1964) are not. And even more troubling is the retention of the "sweet tang of rape" line in the very first James Bond novel, *Casino Royale*, which turned 70 on April 13, 2023.

'Intellectual curiosity'

While offering thrills, chills and a multi-billion dollar movie franchise, the James Bond novels are products of their time with dreadfully regressive views. There is something so decidedly racist and chauvinist about the books, that they logically should be preserved as an intellectual curiosity.

Anthony Horowitz, who wrote three continuation James Bond novels – *Trigger Mortis* (2015), *Forever and a Day* (2018) and *With a Mind to Kill* (2022) in an interview said the novels need to be read in their historical context. Using the example of *Live and Let Die* (which has come in for sensitivity snipping), Horowitz speaks of the ratcheting tension of Bond being dragged over a coral reef towards the end of the book. "There is so much in the Bond world, which is so great and so wonderful. Let us celebrate that."

Unfortunately, Fleming, Christie and Dahl are not alive to rewrite their books from a prism of today.

However, Hergé sought to right his wrongs with meticulous research. This is evident from how the intrepid boy reporter goes from blowing up a poor rhinoceros with dynamite in *Tintin in Congo* to his deep friendship with the Chinese boy, Chang, who he goes to rescue in *Tintin in Tibet*.

Objectives of reworking

What exactly do these sensitivity reworkings hope to achieve? Is it to say that these writers were all forward thinking and did not have problematic views on anything? Or that the world was a wonderful place? Also, there is the question of what is troublesome to which reader, across gender, time and place.

Where will the rewritings end? Will Tonga, be written out of Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Sign of Four*? And how about the opening scene in the book where Holmes shoots up "a seven per cent solution" of cocaine and asks Watson if he would like a shot?

It would be better to leave the books as they are to give the reader a sense of the time. Colonialism was a fact of life in Christie's earlier novels.

The James Bond novels were an escape for an England reeling under post-war shortages, which could explain Bond's inflammatory views on race, gender and sexuality.

Cocaine was considered a medical miracle during the time of Sherlock Holmes. It was supposed to be a divine drug with many medical professionals singing its praises including a young Austrian, Sigmund Freud.

So when we read of Holmes rolling his sleeve back and considering the track marks on his arm, we can see it as a reflection of the time and not as a glamourisation of drug abuse. The television show, *Elementary*, which has brought Holmes to New York and gender switched Moriarty and Watson, features Holmes in rehab and Watson as his sober companion.

Rather than editing out words and phrases, the books would be better served if they come with a disclaimer that they reflect the attitudes of the times they were published in.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

The first few decades of the 20th century laid the foundation for quantum mechanics. Today's quiz is about the knabenphysik

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1
Knabenphysik is German for "____ _____". The physics of this period was called thus because it was dominated by young male physicists. Fill in the blanks.

QUESTION 2
The physics of this time was so male-dominated that there was only one woman at the famous 1927 Solvay Conference. Who?

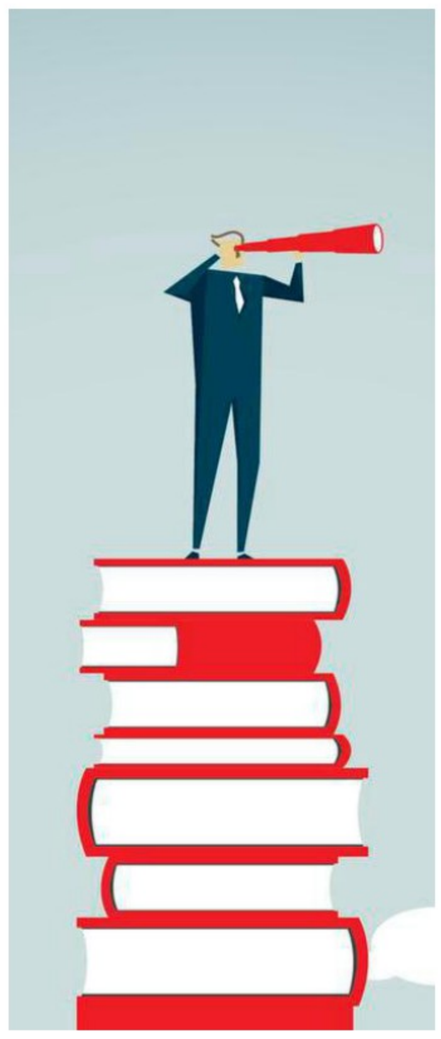
QUESTION 3
One of the knaben was X, who found that any system will exclude an electron if it has another electron with the same four quantum numbers. Name X.

QUESTION 4
One was viciously persecuted by an anti-Semitic physics movement in the 1930s, was part of the Nazi nuclear research programme, and shared his last name with a character's pseudonym in the TV show Breaking Bad. Who?

QUESTION 5
Enrico Fermi and Paul Dirac created rules to describe the properties of subatomic particles that follow X's precept (above). Name the Indian who helped create the rules for particles that ignore it.

Visual question:
She worked in the knabenphysik period, figured out nuclear fission, was left out of a Nobel Prize, and had an element named for her. Who? WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The first recorded encounter killing in Andhra Pradesh was of this local hero in the Rampa Rebellion of 1922. He was a revolutionary who waged an armed campaign against the British colonial rule in India. This 2022 Telugu film showcased the life of this hero. **Ans: Alluri Sitarama Raju, *RRR***
2. This Indian underworld don took a taxi to Wadala and was killed in an alleged encounter there. His life inspired this film. **Ans: Manya Surve, *Agneepath***
3. In Gujarat, this person was taken away by the police and killed three days later in 2015 near Ahmedabad. This Union Minister was accused and acquitted in the case. **Ans: Sohrabuddin Sheikh, Amit Shah**
4. This Delhi Police operation resulted in the deaths of two terrorists and one police officer, following five serial blasts in 2008. It was made into this 2019 thriller film starring John Abraham. **Ans: Batla House encounter**
Visual: Identify the two people. **Ans: Veerappan, Actor Rajkumar**
Early Birds: Indra Sharma| Poonam Jaswal| Prem Ram| Garima Singh



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"Mr. S. V. Negeswara Rao, Pailavari Street, Kothepet, Vijayawada, wants to know the difference between 'How come you aren't at school today? and 'Why aren't you at school today?"

" 'How come' means 'how did it happen?' How did it happen that you aren't at school today? or how is it that you aren't at school today? This has a rather friendly tone. There is some concern for the absentee. 'Why aren't you at school today' is a straightforward question. Very often it has an authoritarian or accusatory tone. But it can also have a friendly tone if the right kind of intonation is used."

"Mr. H. S. Krishnaswamy, 9, Mariamman Koil, Tiruchi, wants to know the pronunciation of 'desert'."

"'The 'sand-covered waste-land' is called a desert. The first 'e' is pronounced like the 'e' in 'bed' and the second 'e' like the final sound in China. The 's' is pronounced 'z'; 'r' is silent. The stress is on the first syllable.

Have you heard of the Sahara desert?

'Desert' is also used as a verb in the sense of 'to go away from, to leave someone in a wrong or cruel way'.

They deserted the village because of drought.

He deserted his wife.

When it is used as a verb, the first 'e' in 'desert' is pronounced like the 'e' in 'bid', the second 'e' is pronounced like the 'i' in 'bird'. The 's' is pronounced 'z' and the 'r' is silent. The stress is on the second syllable."

"Mr. K. Vasudevan, Kothari Electronics and Industries Ltd., Hosur, wants to know whether the word 'indigenisation' is correct as he does not find it in dictionaries. He says he finds only 'indigenous' in dictionaries."

"'Indigenise' and 'indigenisation' are both found in dictionaries published recently. These words are used frequently these days. 'Indigenise' means 'to adapt or subject to native culture or influence'."

Published in The Hindu on September 29, 1987

Word of the day

Mollify:
cause to be more favourably inclined; gain the good will of; make more temperate, acceptable, or suitable by adding something else; make less rigid or softer

Synonyms: gentle, conciliate, pacify, gruntle, placate, appease, assuage, season, temper, moderate

Usage: *She managed to mollify the angry customer.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/mollifypro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈmɒlɪfaɪ/

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A BG-BGE

Nadda says he is hopeful of five-year term for Bommai

With actor Sudeep by his side, the Chief Minister holds a roadshow before filing his nomination papers in his home turf Shiggaon

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

BJP national president J.P. Nadda with Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and actor Sudeep during a roadshow in Haveri district on Wednesday. PTI

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Wednesday took out a mega roadshow, flanked by party's national president J.P. Nadda and Kannada film star Sudeep in his home turf Shiggaon, and filed nomination papers seeking re-election for a fourth term.

Addressing a huge gathering before filing his nomination papers, Mr. Bommai again made his typical emotional speech, and vowed to serve the people till his last breath. "After my death, my mortal remains should be buried in Shiggaon's soil," he said.

He said he had facilitated construction of 10,000 houses in the last 15 years and reconstruction of 12,000 houses that were damaged during rains. In Savanur, Bankapur, Shiggaon itself 6,000 houses have been constructed and every household was getting water, he said.

From the land of parched tanks, now the constituency has over 100 filled tanks, he said.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Nadda showered praises on Mr. Bommai said that looking at the kind of support that the Chief Minister commanded, he would get five-year term as the Chief Minister.

Elaborating on the good work done by Mr. Bommai during a short term, Mr. Nadda said he was not here to seek support only for Mr. Bommai but for "seeking support to lotus to lead Karnataka" in the path of progress.

"The Congress means corruption and under the Congress, Karnataka will become the party's ATM. If you elect the Congress, they will send money to Delhi, but if you vote for the BJP, Mr. Modi will send money for development. The BJP means development," he said.

Support for 'mama'

Earlier, Mr. Sudeep showered praises on Mr. Bommai, whom he referred to as "mama" throughout his speech.

Subsequently, Mr. Bommai filed his nomination papers. He was also accompanied by Minister Govind Karjol.

Siddaramaiah alleges internal understanding between BJP and JD(S) in Varuna

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on the way to file his nomination papers on Wednesday. M.A. SRIRAM

Bringing back memories of 2018 when the Congress had described the Janata Dal (Secular) as "B team" of the BJP, former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has accused the two of entering into an "internal understanding" in Varuna Assembly constituency with a view to defeat him in the coming elections.

Addressing a large gathering of his supporters at Goluru circle on the outskirts of Nanjangud before proceeding to file nomination papers as Congress candidate for Varuna on Wednesday, Mr. Siddaramaiah said the JD(S) has fielded Bharathi Shankar, former BJP MLA, who had earlier represented T. Narsipura (reserved) Assembly segment to "divide Dalit votes" while the BJP has fielded Housing Minister V. Somanna, a resident of Bengaluru.

"The BJP is gripped by fear due to the love and admiration showered upon me by the people of the State," he said while adding that the party had entered into an internal understanding with the JD(S) determined to defeat him.

Mr. Siddaramaiah had earlier also accused the BJP and the JD(S) of having an internal understanding in Chamundeshwari Assembly constituency in 2018 elections when he was defeated by JD(S) candidate G.T. Deve Gowda.

> The ensuing elections will be my last. Later, it will be my son Yathindra and my grandson Dhawan Rakesh. Dhawan has eight years to go before he turns 25 and becomes eligible to contest elections.
>
> **SIDDARAMAIAH**
> Congress leader

However, Mr. Siddaramaiah expressed confidence that the voters of Varuna will see through the "conspiracy" of the BJP and JD(S) this time and hand out a comprehensive defeat to their candidates. "I have faith that you will elect me with a huge margin," he said. Contending that he was a native of Varuna as his birthplace Siddaramanahundi was part of the constituency, Mr. Siddaramaiah said he had won from the constituency in 2008 and 2013 by a margin of more than 30,000 votes while his son Yathindra had won by a lead of more than 59,000 votes during 2018.

He appealed to the voters of Varuna to elect him from the constituency with a margin of over 1 lakh votes this time. He said he may not be able to campaign much in the constituency due to his preoccupation in the rest of the State. He said he would come for campaign for only two days and and called upon the voters to consider themselves as the Congress candidates and give strength to the party.

He reiterated that the ensuing Assembly polls were his last, but added that he was only retiring from electoral politics.

Bhavani, Revanna extend support to Swaroop in Hassan

JD(S) leader Bhavani Revanna with party candidate H.P. Swaroop in Hassan on Wednesday. PRAKASH HASSAN

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

Former Minister and JD(S) leader H.D. Revanna, his wife Bhavani Revanna and Lok Sabha member Prajwal Revanna have announced their support for H.P. Swaroop, party's candidate in Hassan, and announced they would campaign for him.

Mr. Swaroop, in turn, took their blessings by touching their feet at a party workers' meeting in Hassan on Wednesday. Ms. Bhavani and Mr. Swaroop were among the contenders for the party ticket and it had turned into a family feud. The party finally nominated Mr. Swaroop, son of former MLA H.S. Prakash.

Addressing the gathering, Ms. Bhavani said she had sought party ticket as the BJP MLA in Hassan had challenged Mr. Revanna's family to contest in Hassan. "However, nothing is more important for me than my father-in-law's health. I have accepted his decision. I told H.D. Kumaraswamy to offer the ticket to Mr. Swaroop," she said. "Our target is to defeat the BJP," she announced.

'A sacrifice'

Mr. Revanna reiterated that his wife "sacrificed" the constituency in the interest of party supremo H.D. Deve Gowda's health. "We have no differences in the party. We will all work for Mr. Swaroop's victory," he said. The meeting was convened ahead of Mr. Swaroop's nomination, scheduled for Thursday. Mr. Deve Gowda, Mr. Kumaraswamy, and other senior leaders will take part in the procession to be held on the day.

Modi to visit State eight more times for campaign starting from April 28

B.S. Sathish Kumar
BENGALURU

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has already visited poll-bound Karnataka eight times since January, is set to make a minimum of another eight visits in the run-up to the Assembly elections. According to sources in the BJP, Mr. Modi may commence his second series of visits tentatively from April 28.

As the party is banking heavily on the influence of Mr. Modi in the elections, the party is keen to ensure that he visits all or most of the districts of the State. A BJP State office-bearer said the party is working out a tightly packed schedule of three to four conventions during every visit.

"The Prime Minister's schedule is yet to be finalised. However, we are working out on a possibility of him addressing three to four conventions a day," a State functionary said. Mr. Modi will address public meetings and also take out roadshows.

The party, which is facing rebellion by some of the disappointed ticket aspirants, including its senior leaders Jagadish Shettar and Laxman Savadi joining the Congress, is keenly waiting for the commencement of the second round of visits by Mr. Modi to instil confidence among its cadre and to send a message to its supporters.

Shah to arrive

Meanwhile Union Minister Amit Shah is arriving in the State on April 21, a day after the deadline for filing of nominations ends, to review the poll preparations. He will be holding a meeting of district poll incharge leaders and prominent leaders on April 21. He will also be participating in roadshows in different cities on both April 21 and 22. He is expected to set the stage for Mr. Modi's campaign during his visit.

BJP leaders also plan to effectively use Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for the poll campaign in Karnataka. Several other national leaders, including Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Surface Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, will addresse conventions in different areas in addition to those by Smriti Irani as star campaigners.

Congress names 40 star campaigners

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Opposition Congress on Wednesday announced a list of 40 star campaigners for party candidates in the Assembly elections.

The prominent leaders are AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, AICC former presidents Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, AICC general Secretary Priyanka Vadra, KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar, former Chief Ministers Siddaramaiah, M. Veerappa Moily, and Jagadish Shettar, actors Umashree, Ramya (Divya Spandana), and Indian Youth Congress president B.V. Srinivas, according to a release.

Campaign frenzy

Supporters greeting Congress candidate Priya Krishna in Bengaluru on Wednesday during his roadshow for the Assembly election. PTI

Govt. failed to protect State from dangers of centralisation, says Bahutva Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Continuing its series of 'report cards' on the performance of the Karnataka government on various parameters, Bahutva Karnataka, on Wednesday, released its assessment on 'federalism' and deemed it 'failed'.

The forum alleged that the government has abdicated its constitutional duty to protect the people of Karnataka from the dangers of centralisation. The Constitution describes India as a 'Union of States'. The State government has increasingly been run by the 'whims of puppeteers in New Delhi', and has not been accountable to the people of Karnataka, it said.

Vinay Sreenivasa, convener of the forum, told mediapersons: "Karnataka's economic progress and resources are being expropriated. Our State's unique cultural heritage is being eroded with the imposition of Hindi, and the State government has ceded all decision-making power to New Delhi, leaving it unable to advocate for its own people."

Bahutva Karnataka analysed the State government's performance from 2019 to 2023.

"The State's share of Central taxes and GST, and funds for Centrally-sponsored Schemes has dropped significantly," Mr. Sreenivasa said. "Karnataka's plea to conduct competitive exam in Kannada for the Centre's recruitment has fallen on deaf ears. Despite its 'classical language' status, Kannada has received far less support than other languages. Though the BJP vowed to resolve the Mahadayi dispute, there has been silence," he added.

Total seizures by EC cross ₹200 crore

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Since March 29, when the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) came into force in Karnataka, the Election Commission's total seizures have crossed ₹204 crore, including cash, liquor, drugs, and precious metals. This includes ₹16.92 crore seized in the last 24 hours.

Overall during the 2018 elections, over ₹185.74 crore was seized. The EC had seized cash and articles worth nearly ₹58 crore (between March 9 to 27) even before the election date was announced. The EC has identified 81 expenditure sensitive constituencies this year.

After the MCC came into force, the amount of cash seized was ₹76.7 crore, while liquor worth ₹42.82 crore, narcotics worth ₹15.25 crore, precious metals worth ₹49.71 crore, and other items (freebies) worth ₹19.59 crore were seized, said a release from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka, on Wednesday. Police authorities have booked 1,629 FIRs with regard to seizures of cash, liquor, drugs, precious metal, and freebies and 11,276 non-bailable warrants were executed from the date of the announcement of polls.

In the last 24 hours, the Special Surveillance Teams and Income Tax Department have seized 7.793 kg of gold worth ₹50.42 lakh in Dharwad constituency, 11.42 kg of gold worth ₹6.49 crore, and 74.896 kg of silver worth ₹44.63 lakh in Haveri constituency.

Ayanur Manjunath among many party-hoppers in JD(S) third list; party changes candidates in 12 seats

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ayanur Manjunath

Hours after senior BJP leader Ayanur Manjunath announced his exit from the saffron party and resigned from membership of the Legislative Council, the Janata Dal (Secular) announced him as its nominee from Shivamogga city Assembly constituency. The regional outfit, which released its third list of candidates for 59 seats on Wednesday, has named former BJP legislator M.P. Kumaraswamy and former Congress MLC Raghu Achar for Mudigere and Chitradurga Assembly seats, respectively, while former Congress MP Anil Lad has been named for Ballari city.

Mr. Manjunath is the third big Lingayat leader who quit the BJP in the last week after former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar and former Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi.

'B form'

While Mr. Manjunath's exit had been speculated for some time now after he had fired salvo at the party earlier, his entry into the JD(S) was negotiated by the former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy on Wednesday in Chitradurga. He was also given the party's 'B form' immediately.

'Safeguarding harmony'

"Communal harmony in Shivamogga has been affected badly. My contest will be in the interest of safeguarding harmony in the city. Though Shivamogga has got rail and air connectivity, hardly any investor has shown interest to invest," he said, justifying his decision to quit the BJP. "Shivamogga has been branded as a city known for violence. It is an insult to the residents."

Mr. Manjunath is among the very few politicians to have had the privilege of being the member of both Houses of legislature and both Houses of Parliament.

He had been lobbying for the BJP ticket from Shivamogga city where senior BJP leader K.S. Eshwarappa has announced retirement from electoral politics.

Replaced

The party has also announced change of candidates in 12 seats where the names had been announced earlier. In Arsikere, former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa's relative N.R. Santhosh will replace Banavara Ashok, in Varuna former BJP MLA Bharathi Shankar will replace Abhishek, who was alleged to be missing from poll campaign.

It has replaced former Minister B.B. Ningaiah in Mudigere to accommodate M.P. Kumaraswamy who migrated to the JD(S). In Mandya, its sitting legislator M. Srinivas has been replaced by the president of Mandya Milk Union Ltd. B.R. Ramachandra.

Supports CPI(M)/RPI

Meanwhile, the party has decided not to contest from seven constituencies where it will extend support to others.

The JD(S) has announced support to CPI(M) candidates in Bagepalli, Kalaburagi (North), and K.R. Puram, it has extended support to RPI candidates in C.V. Raman Nagar, Vijayanagar, and Mahadevapura in Bengaluru. The party has also decided to extend support to Darshan Dhruvanarayan, son of former KPCC working president late R. Dhruvanarayan, who is contesting from Nanjangud.

From Page One

BJP denies ticket to Eshwarappa's son

Earlier in the day, another aspirant for the Shivamogga seat Ayanuru Manjunath quit his MLC seat and the BJP membership to join the JD(S), which then gave him the ticket to contest as its candidate.

Mr. Eshwarappa welcomed the decision to field Mr. Channabasappa, who is a long-time party worker from Shivamogga. Already several incumbent MLAs, who were denied the party ticket, have expressed their displeasure by quitting the party, while the former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar and the former Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi have even joined the Congress.

The BJP has given the ticket to the former Congress functionary B.V. Nayak to contest from Manvi of Raichur district. Mr. Nayak, who was disappointed over not getting the Congress ticket, joined the BJP only on Tuesday. He was the president of the Raichur district Congress unit.

Pulikeshinagar seat

A noteworthy feature of the Congress list is that in Pulikeshinagar constituency in Bengaluru, the party denied the ticket to incumbent MLA R. Akhanda Srinivas Murthy, who had quit the membership of the Legislative Assembly. He filed his nomination paper as an Independent candidate on Wednesday.

The party has fielded A.C. Srinivasa in Pulikeshinagar constituency. In 2018, Mr. Srinivasa contested against Aravind Limbavali of the BJP in Mahadevapura constituency and was defeated.

In Mulbagal, the Congress gave the ticket to B.C. Muddugangadhar, while D.K. Mohan is the party's candidate in K.R. Pura constituency in Bengaluru.

With this, the BJP has completed the process of announcing candidates for all the 224 seats in the Legislative Assembly. The Congress is yet to announce candidates for four constituencies.

INBRIEF

Vande Bharat's second trial run completed successfully

On its second trial run, Kerala's first Vande Bharat train covered the 586 km from Thiruvananthapuram to Kasaragod in 7 hours and 51 minutes, at an average speed of 73 km per hour. It covered the 223-km Thiruvananthapuram-Kottayam-Ernakulam stretch in 3 hours and 12 minutes. The train that set off from Thiruvananthapuram at 5.20 a.m., arrived Ernakulam at 8.22 a.m. It reached Kannur at 12.13 p.m., taking six hours and 53 minutes. It reached Kasaragod at 1.11 p.m.

In its first trial run, Vande Bharat covered the 500-km Thiruvananthapuram-Kannur stretch in 7 hours and 10 minutes, at an average speed of just over 70 kmph.

T.N. Assembly resolution urges Centre to extend quota for Dalit Christians

Chief Minister Stalin feels that it is unfair to deny them the benefits of reservation enjoyed by the other members of the same community, just because they had converted to Christianity

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Wednesday adopted a resolution, moved by Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, urging the Centre to amend the Constitution to extend statutory protection, rights, and concessions, including reservation, to Scheduled Caste members who have converted to Christianity.

BJP member Vanathi Srinivasan opposed the resolution and walked out with the other members of her party after Speaker M. Appavu expunged certain remarks made by her.

Chief Minister Stalin speaking in the State Assembly. FILE PHOTO

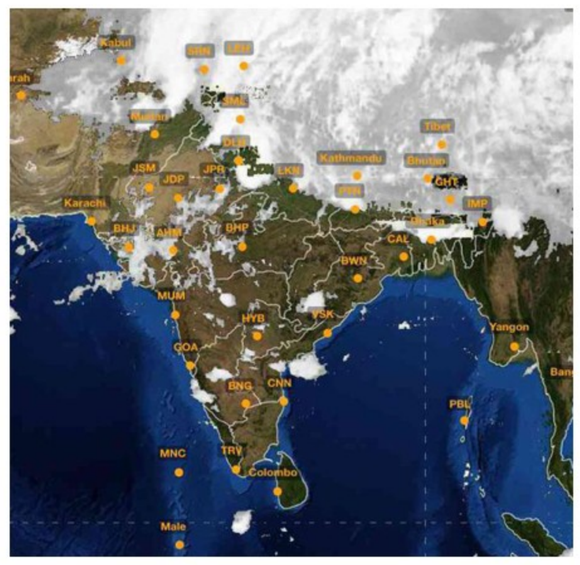
Mr. Stalin said the government had held discussions and consulted legal experts before moving the resolution. "We have not done it in a hurry. The walkout by the BJP has confirmed that we have done it in an appropriate manner," he said. He acknowledged that the Adi Dravidars continued to face caste atrocities even after conversion to Christianity.

"According to the Constitution, those who have converted to any religion, other than Sikhism and Buddhism, cannot claim the Scheduled Caste status. When they remain as the Scheduled Castes historically, it is but fair to extend them the benefits. They can get education and employment only through reservation...," he argued.

Mr. Stalin felt that it was unfair to deny them the benefits of reservation, enjoyed by the other members of the same community, just because they had converted to Christianity. "While humans have the right to follow the religion of their choice, they cannot do it in the case of caste. Caste is not just about the identity of two different persons. On the other hand, it treats one as higher and the other as lower. It is not horizontal, but vertical. The philosophy of social justice is to use the same casteism, a tool of oppression, to provide reservation and uplift the victims of oppression," the Chief Minister said.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 19.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Heavy rainfall/snowfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty wind likely at isolated places over Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, coastal Karnataka, Kerala and Mahe

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	38.0	27.5	Kozhikode	—	37.0	27.4
Ahmedabad	—	40.7	27.4	Kurnool	—	43.0	26.2
Aizawl	—	26.0	18.5	Lucknow	—	41.0	25.5
Allahabad	—	44.5	24.4	Madurai	—	39.8	25.6
Bengaluru	—	36.1	22.2	Mangaluru	—	35.0	25.8
Bhopal	1	39.8	24.8	Mumbai	—	38.8	25.6
Bhubaneswar	—	42.5	26.1	Mysuru	—	36.5	22.9
Chandigarh	2.4	36.5	20.5	New Delhi	—	38.2	23.6
Chennai	—	38.8	26.0	Patna	—	43.5	26.5
Coimbatore	—	38.7	25.4	Port Blair	—	33.7	27.1
Dehradun	0.9	33.5	21.7	Puducherry	—	36.2	26.4
Gangtok	0.4	24.0	16.0	Pune	—	40.7	23.1
Goa	—	34.4	25.8	Raipur	—	43.0	28.3
Guwahati	—	37.0	23.1	Ranchi	—	40.0	24.9
Hubballi	—	40.0	22.0	Shillong	—	29.1	18.3
Hyderabad	—	39.4	25.0	Shimla	59	21.8	8.8
Imphal	—	34.3	20.9	Srinagar	16	11.5	10.3
Jaipur	—	38.2	26.4	Thiruvananthapuram	—	35.0	26.4
Kochi	—	33.0	29.0	Tiruchi	—	39.5	26.4
Kohima	—	26.0	18.4	Vijayawada	—	39.4	25.2
Kolkata	—	41.6	28.7	Visakhapatnam	—	33.6	28.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	38	73	24	103	203	
Bengaluru	8	49	38	85	109	
Chennai	3	74	99	84	76	
Delhi	4	134	86	171	260	
Hyderabad	8	29	51	152	151	
Kolkata	7	9	25	80	103	
Lucknow	5	63	34	306	217	
Mumbai	12	14	15	181	137	
Pune	30	50	42	385	270	
Visakhapatnam	15	46	41	119	172	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Dhanbad, Jharkhand recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 383 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 33

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Batting for bats: Kerala Forest Research Institute strives to dispel myths

Mini Muringatheri
THRISSUR

Bats have been cloaked in superstition since ancient times. Their nocturnal nature and spooky appearance place them in horror stories.

The Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) is on a mission to dispel myths associated with bats and create awareness about their diversity, ecosystem functions, and threats faced by them.

KFRI Director Syam Viswanath launched a social media campaign 'Bat for Bats' at the institute recently as part of International Bat Appreciation Day. Founded by the Bat Conservation International in 2013, the day aims to remind people of the role bats play in daily lives of people.

People are largely unaware of the economic and environmental benefits that bats provide to humans. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Nithin Divakar, who is doing doctoral research on bats at the KFRI, says the public is largely unaware of the economic and environmental benefits that bats provide to humans. Globally, there are 1,460 species of bats categorised into 21 families. In India, 135 bat species belonging to nine families have been identified, with Kerala home to 48 of the species. Bats play a crucial role in pollination and seed dispersal of over 500 plants of commercial and ecological value, aiding in forest regeneration, he says. "Studies show that an insectivorous bat, which can be as small as our little finger, can consume at least 1,400 small insects in an hour, helping to save billions of dollars in agricultural losses," says Mr. Divakar. "Anthropogenic factors such as habitat loss, poaching, environmental pollution, climate change, and biological invasions have caused the decline of bat population worldwide," he says.

At present, the KFRI is undertaking three key projects on bats, says Dr. Balakrishnan.

The first is a long-term study that focusses on the community ecology of bats in Kerala across various vegetational gradients. The second is on participatory conservation efforts for Salim Ali's fruit bat, the only endangered bat species in Kerala, with support from the Conservation Leadership Programme. The third is a citizen science programme called the Indian Fruit Bat Project launched in June 2022.

CBI questions YSRCP leader

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

YSR Congress Party Lok Sabha member from Kadapa in Andhra Pradesh Y.S. Avinash Reddy appeared before the CBI officials in Hyderabad on Wednesday in connection with the murder case of the former Minister Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy in 2019. This is the fifth time this year that Mr. Avinash Reddy is appearing before the CBI.

Mamata backs Stalin's move on 'time limit for Governors'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has backed Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's 'time limit for Governors to act on Bills' pitch and suggested a meeting of Chief Ministers of non-BJP ruled States to decide next course of action.

"Mamata Banerjee spoke to me over phone to express her solidarity and admiration for our initiatives against the undemocratic functioning of Governors in non-BJP ruled States," Mr. Stalin said in a Twitter post on Wednesday.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. SNTGSUWATOTAUTOCPPDSI0123

Name of Work: PROVISION OF AUTOMATIC BLOCK SIGNALLING SYSTEM IN CHIPURUPALLI (CPP)-DUSI(DSI) SECTION WITH EI ALTERATION AT CHIPURUPALLI (CPP), SIGADAM (SGDM), PONDURU (PDU) AND DUSI (DSI) STATIONS, EXCLUDING MSDAC IN WALTAIR DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.

Advertised Value: ₹16,70,82,953/-
EMD: ₹9,85,400/-, Period of Completion: **12 Months,** Validity of Offer (Days): **90.**
Bidding Start Date: **20.04.2023** **Tender Closing Date & Time :** at **1200hrs.** of **04.05.2023**

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letterhead and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website **https://www.ireps.gov.in**

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website **07** (seven) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.

Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer (GSU)/ Waltair
PR-12/CG/23-24

इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank
इलाहाबाद ALLAHABAD

Zonal Office, 4th Floor, East Wing
Raheja Towers, No. 26, 27,
M G Road, BANGALORE - 560 001
PH: 080-22958899

Notice Inviting Offers

Indian Bank, Zonal Office, Bangalore invites sealed offers from owners willing to offer on lease basis office premises, measuring 1200 sq.ft for branch premises and 80-100 sq.ft for ATM preferably in Ground Floor, for opening of branch with ATM facility in the following locations / Center.

(1) Whitefield (2) Mahadevapura (3) Manyata Business Park

For eligibility criteria, application form, and other details, please refer to website **http://www.indianbank.in/tender.php**

Last date: 06.05.2023 **Sd/- ZONAL MANAGER**

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public are hereby informed that **The Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Co-operative Ltd.,(The CAMPCO Ltd.,)** having its registered office at P.B No: 223, Varanashi Towers, Mission Street, Mangaluru-575001, intends to Purchase the schedule property in terms of settlement held with **M/S. SHREE ARECANUTS,** L-10, APMC Yard, Shimoga, a partnership firm represented by its partners Viz. **SRI. A. SHIVARAMA BHATTA,** in Ex Case No.73/2020 before the 1st Addl. Senior Civil Judge and CJM Shimoga. The subject matter of the scheduled property is owned by **(1) MR. SRIRAMA IYENGAR ALIAS SRIRAMA,** S/o Late H. L. Gunda Iyengar, aged about 50 years, Proprietor, Srivatsa Deepam Traders, resident of No. NH.1-504, 5th Floor, Sri Ram Surabhi Apartments, Mallasandra, Kumaran School Road, Bengaluru -560062. **(2) SMT. GARGEE ALIAS GARGI SRIRAMA,** W/o. Srirama, aged about 46 years, Managing Partner, **SRIHARI TRADERS** and Manager, Sri Vathsa Deepam Traders, resident of No. NH.1-504, 5th Floor, Sri Ram Surabhi Apartments, Mallasandra, Kumaran School Road, Bengaluru -560062, who acquired the same, as per Registered sale deed dated 31-01-2019, registered as document No. JAY-1-10540-2018-19, in C.D. No. JAYD397, before the Sub-Registrar, Jayanagar, Bangalore City. They have represented that the Original title deeds in respect of schedule property have been misplaced and inspite of their best efforts, they could not trace the same.

Therefore, anybody having any claim over the schedule property or any portion thereof, may lodge their claim in writing with necessary supporting original documents before the undersigned within Seven days from the date of this publication. If no claims are received within Seven days from anybody, thereafter no claims will be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing **SITE NO.3 KATHA NO.208** formed in converted **OLD SURVEY NO.15/1 NEW SURVEY NO.15/1-P1** vide conversion order No.B.DIS.ALN.SR(S)192/2000-01 dated 25-01-2002 of Special Deputy Commissioner Bengaluru District, Bengaluru situated at Mallasandra village Uttarahali, Hobli Bengaluru South Taluk presently Kagalipuram Grama Panchayat Property No.150200300101501557 Katha No.362/3 measuring East to West 81.1 ft. and North to South 50 ft. in all measuring **4055 sq. ft.** with the following boundary:

EAST : SITE NO.11 AND 12.
WEST : ROAD.
NORTH : SITE NO.2.
SOUTH : SITE NO.4.

Sd/-, MANAGING DIRECTOR
The CAMPCO Ltd., P.B No: 223,
Varanashi Towers, Mission Street, Mangaluru- 575001.

Place: Mangalore
Date: 17.04.2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

The General public are hereby notified that, our client has agreed to purchase the Schedule Property from its Owner **SMT.N.MANJULA** W/o Sri.S.Muralidhar, residing in the Schedule Property. The Owner represents that she is the absolute owner of the Schedule Property and she has good marketable, right, title and interest therein.

Apart from the above owner, if any person has any manner of claim, right, title, interest or demand of any nature in or over the Schedule Property or any part thereof, the same shall be filed with the undersigned with supporting documents, within **7 (Seven) days** from the date of this Notice. Objections and or the claims received after expiry of the stipulated time will not be binding on our client and our client will proceed with the sale transaction.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the residential property bearing **Municipal No.153/1422** (Old No.411, prior to that No.38/15 & 38/16 prior to that No.341, Site No.26), 'Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Krupa' measuring East to West 45ft and North to South 30ft, in all measuring 1350 Sq.ft, with a house thereon, situated at **2nd Cross, Vaikuntam Layout, Munnekolalu** (Munnekolala) Village, near Lakshminarayana Pura, Varthur Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District-560 037, within the administrative jurisdiction of BBMP ward No.85-Doddanekkundi and bounded as follows:

East by : Road
West by : Private Property
North by : Property bearing No.27
South by : Property bearing No.25

Sd/- BAYYA REDDY. M
For ISHA LAW CHAMBERS LLP
Advocates & Solicitors
No.101, 4th Floor, Sri Manjunatha Complex, 22nd Main Road,
BSK 2nd Stage, Opp : Banashankari BDA Complex, Bengaluru-560070

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified that, my clients have agreed to purchase the Schedule property from its owners: **(1) Smt.Sheela Visweswara, her children Sri.B.V.Ravikumar & Smt.Veena Prasanna (the wife and children of late B.K.Visweswara), (2) Sri.B.K.Maheshchandra, (3) Sri.B.K.Jagadishchandra, (4) Sri.B.K.Umeshchandra and (5) Dr.B.K.Nageshchandra** residing at: No.7/13,B (old No.14), Second Main Road, Palace Cross Road, Chandavarkar Layout, Bengaluru-560020.

Apart from the said Owners, if any other person/s have any manner of right, title and or interest or claim or charge or lien over the Schedule property or otherwise have any lawful objection/s for sale of the Schedule Property by the aforesaid Owners, they are hereby called upon to file their objection/s in writing, along with the photocopies of documents on which they rely, with the undersigned, within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on my clients.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Municipal Nos.213-217, PID No.46-5-213-217, measuring East to West 130 ft and North to South 110 ft, with a building thereon comprised of Ground, First and Second Floor, situated at 3rd Main Road, Chamrajpet, Bengaluru and bounded on:

East by : 4th Cross Road
West by : Property bearing Municipal No.1122
North by : Conservancy
South by : 3rd Main Road

Sd/- Goutam Chand S.F
Advocate
Goutam Associates
No.60, 2nd Floor, Kanakapura Road,
Basavanagudi, Bangalore – 560 004

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF (CIVIL), ODISHA
NIRMAN SOUDHA, KESHARI NAGAR, UNIT- V, BHUBANESWAR-751001

3rd corrigendum to RFP Identification No. CE-WBP (0) - 42 /2022-23
File No- PIM - Misc.- 10/2008 (Pt)

Following changes are made to the Invitation for qualification / proposal for the work **"Construction of H. L. Bridge over river Kharasrota on Nua Bazar - Balitara Ghat road in the District of Kendrapara under State Plan (Identified project across National Waterways, IWAI)"** through EPC mode of Contract" vide RFP Identification No. CE-W.B.P. (0) - 42 / 2022-23.

- The Last date of submission of tender is extended **upto 10.00 AM of dt.26.04.2023**
- Bids received on line shall be opened at **10.30 A.M. on 26.04.2023**.

All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

Chief Engineer, World Bank Projects, Odisha.
B-94: OIPR-34003/11/0006/2324

GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION
SPECIAL PROJECTS DEPARTMENT

S.P.D.C.No.B1/0865/2022 **Re - e - TENDER NOTICE**

Re - e - Tender are invited for the following works in Two Cover System as per details furnished below.

Name of the Work

S.P.D.C.No.B1/0865/2022:-
Construction of Pedestrian Plaza at Monegar Choultry Road (M.C. Road) in Division No.51, Zone-V under Mega Street Projects Approximate value of work - Rs. 20.99 Crore (Inclusive of GST) - E.M.D. Rs.20,99,000/-

S.P.D.C.No.B1/0866/2022:-
Construction of Pedestrian Plaza along Khader Nawaz Khan Road (KNK Road) in Division No.111, Zone-IX under Mega Street Projects Approximate value of work- Rs.15.18 Crore (Inclusive of GST) - E.M.D. Rs. 15,18,000/-

Tender document will be available in website https://tntenders.gov.in
The bidders must possess Digital Signature Certificate for submission of bids through online in the above website.
Pre-bid meeting date and time : **04.05.2023 at 3.00 pm**
Tender last date and time of submission : **22.05.2023 upto 3.00 pm**
Tender opening date and time : **23.05.2023 at 3.00 pm**

Superintending Engineer (Special Projects)

சாலை வடிவு சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம் DIPR / 2235 / Tender / 2023

ODISHA STATE SEEDS CORPORATION LIMITED
(A GOVERNMENT UNDERTAKING)
SANTARAPUR, BHUBANESWAR- 751002.
Tel-MD 0674- 2340573, Tel Fax-2340096, E-mail - mdosscltd456@gmail.com

Short e-Tender Call Notice
NIT No.OSSC/Mktg(Hort)-06/2023

OSSC Ltd. invites e-Tender only from Producers (and in case of GOI PSUs, their authorized Agencies) on item wise rate contract basis for procurement of TL seed material of Ginger and Turmeric Rhizomes for Kharif-2023 in double cover system through online mode only for the works below.

Name of the work	Purchase of TL seed material of Ginger & Turmeric Rhizomes for Kharif-2023
Nos of work	One
Availability of Bid Documents in Portal	15 hours on 21.04.2023 to 17 hours of 01.05.2023
Last date of receipt of tender in portal	17 hours of 01.05.2023
Date and Time of Opening of Bid	11 hours of 02.05.2023

The detailed descriptions of crops, varieties, quantity, parameters, terms and conditions specified in the tender schedule would be available in the e-Tender portal **www.tendersodisha.gov.in**. Any addendum/ corrigendum / cancellation can also be seen in the said website.

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The caste imperative

Caste census, even if morally flawed, can help in targeting of quota benefits

With the Congress party joining the chorus for an updated caste census, there seems to be an emerging consensus among the political opposition on the need for this exercise. While the parties committed to reservations in the northern belt – the SP and the RJD in particular – have made this demand as a reaction to the expansion of reservation benefits to economically weaker sections among "forward" castes using income criteria, the Congress's pivot towards supporting this stems from the party's new political emphasis on expanding its support base. With the Mandal Commission report of 1980, that was based on caste census data of 1931, still remaining the basis of identifying backwardness and determining the extent of reservation to the OBCs, the need for a comprehensive census that provides data to support, or evaluate existing reservation quotas, or to assess demands for them remains pertinent. Such a diligent exercise would also serve a legal imperative allowing the government to answer the Supreme Court's call for quantifiable data. But counting castes is not easy. An inherent weakness is evident in how the government described the Socio-Economic and Caste Census in 2011: as being riddled with infirmities that made the data collected unusable. Data here recorded 46 lakh different castes, sub-castes, caste/clan surnames, which required adequate parsing before being used for proper enumeration. The survey's hurried conduct, without utilising the Census Commissioners and the Office of the Registrar General properly, also rendered it problematic.

A more thoroughgoing exercise would entail an adequate consolidation of caste/sub-caste names into social groups based on synonymity and equivalence of the self-identified group names revealed by respondents in the census. Marking these groups against the OBC/SC/ST lists for each State would build a useful database, which can be utilised in the decennial Census. The data obtained this way can be used to parse aggregated socioeconomic information for these groups. But with the government having postponed the long-delayed 2021 Census and not acquiescing to the demand of including caste counts, questions remain whether an effective caste census is possible. There is of course the risk of reification of caste identities even as the constitutional order seeks to build a casteless society. But with caste-based identification still predominant, such a census seems politically imperative, even if morally flawed, for the purpose of addressing socioeconomic inequities through facile reservation quotas that confer income benefits and a degree of social justice without actually advancing the cause of a truly casteless society.

Old friends

While strengthening ties with Russia, India must make its stand on war clear

Growing and balancing India-Russia trade ties dominated the agenda of Russian Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov's India visit and the Inter-governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation meet he chaired with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. They hailed the surge in bilateral trade (up by 2.6 times in the past year, and at about $45 billion), surpassing the 2025 target. Both sides noted the problem of trade imbalance, calling for more market access and the use of "national currencies" to circumvent sanctions. Mr. Manturov suggested that Indian companies could increase exports in road construction and pharmaceuticals. Mr. Jaishankar said that Indian businesses should guard against "over-compliance" when it comes to increasing trade with Russia, due to concerns over western sanctions. They also referred to progress in negotiations for an FTA between India and the Eurasian Economic Union, that was launched in 2017. Its signing could catapult trade, which has been the laggard in bilateral ties dominated by defence, nuclear and space cooperation.

While the impetus in trade and the effort to balance imports and exports with an important partner (Russia) are welcome, it is hard to ignore the circumstances surrounding these developments. Since Russia's war in Ukraine began last year, and western sanctions drastically cut Russian exports, Moscow has turned increasingly to India and other countries including China that have not joined the sanctions to export resources. India's oil imports from Russia (a negligible 0.2%), have jumped since the war to a massive 28% of its total oil intake, contributing to trade as well as a growing deficit. While the Ukraine Foreign Minister's accusation that India has "blood" on its hands by buying Russian oil is overstating the case, the impression that New Delhi is "benefitting from the war" is gaining traction in western countries, which must be noted, especially as Mr. Modi will soon visit Japan, Australia, the U.S. and France, and also welcome Mr. Putin for the SCO summit in Delhi in July. Mr. Jaishankar's contention that India-Russia ties are among the "steadiest of the major relationships of the world" is well-made, especially at a time of global turmoil and shifting alliances, and provides the basis for the warm welcome to Mr. Manturov. What is harder to explain is that no public comment was made by any Indian leader during any of Mr. Manturov's meetings in Delhi, about the original reason for the current turmoil and its global economic impact: Moscow's decision to launch attacks on its neighbour, and the bombing of civilians, that has continued for over a year.

It is a new assault on India's liberty

On April 6, 2023, the Union government introduced a new set of measures with a view to crushing fake news and misinformation on the Internet. These introductions came through an amendment made to the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, or IT Rules. The amendment grants to the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) unbridled power to create a "fact check unit", which will identify false or misleading online content that concerns the central government's business in any manner. Should social media intermediaries fail to prevent users from hosting or publishing information that have been flagged as false by the fact check unit, they stand to lose their "safe harbour" immunity. In other words, any protection that online platforms might have enjoyed against criminal prosecution will be withdrawn.

Suhrith Parthasarathy

is an advocate practising in the Madras High Court

The consequence

The upshot of the new regulation is this: the Union government gets to decide for itself what information is bogus and gets to exercise wide-ranging powers of censorship by compelling intermediaries to take down posts deemed fake or false. In a democracy, where information is free, and where the right to freedom of speech is constitutionally guaranteed, the new law must strike us as deeply abhorrent.

The IT Rules derive their authority from the Information Technology Act, 2000, a law which, at its inception, was meant to provide "legal recognition" for electronic commerce. Through section 79, the Act provides a "safe harbour", by granting immunity to intermediaries, so long as these entities observe "due diligence" in discharging their duties under the law, and so long as they follow other guidelines prescribed by the state. An intermediary under the law refers to any person who receives, stores, or transmits electronic records – it would include Internet service providers, search engines, and social media platforms. For example, WhatsApp, Signal, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are all what the law construes as intermediaries.

When the IT Rules were introduced in 2021, in supersession of a previous guideline, it was already riddled by controversy. Divided into two distinct parts, the rules sought to regulate intermediaries through MeitY and the digital news media, including over-the-top (OTT) media services, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime, through the Union Ministry for Information and Broadcasting. Insofar as intermediaries are concerned, the IT Rules imposed a series of onerous obligations, a breach of which could result in a loss of safe harbour.

> The amended IT Rules will not only diminish the right to question authority and speak truth to the power but also erase civil liberties

Among other things, the rules required social media platforms, in particular messaging services, to provide technological solutions that would enable them to identify the first originator of any information on their service, where demanded by government, under a set of given circumstances, or where mandated by an order of court. Given the implication of this on end-to-end encryption, and as a result on our right to privacy, the IT Rules has been subject to several sets of challenges, with petitions now pending consideration in the Supreme Court of India.

Restrictions through executive diktats

The amendments introduced this month bring with them a new assault on our liberty. To be sure, misinformation or fake news – whatever one might want to call it – is rampant on the Internet. Its effects are unquestionably deleterious. But what might the solutions to this problem be? There is the oft-cited passage from Justice Louis Brandeis's classic 1927 opinion in the United States Supreme Court case, *Whitney vs California*, where he wrote that "if there be time to expose through discussion, the falsehoods and fallacies, to avert the evil by the processes of education, the remedy to be applied is more speech, not enforced silence...". But given the structural inequalities in society, we know that a resolution of this kind is not always helpful, that speech by itself can be harmful, and when it is, it demands intervention from the law.

Equally, though, we must be cognisant that not all problems are capable of easy legislative solutions. Certainly, thoughtless censorship is never an answer. What is worse, in the case of the IT Rules, restrictions flow not through legislation, but through executive diktats. And these commands militate against substantive constitutional guarantees. Article 19(1)(a) grants to every citizen a right to freedom of speech and expression. That right can only be limited through reasonable restrictions made by law on one or the other of the grounds stipulated in Article 19(2), namely, in "the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence".

As is plain to see, fake news and misinformation are not grounds on which speech can be limited. No doubt, if a piece of information is proven to be false and has a direct bearing on one of the grounds stipulated in Article 19(2), such speech can be limited through law. But the amendments made to the IT Rules do not caveat the restraints they place in any manner. Instead, they confer on the Fact Check Unit limitless powers to decide what information is false and, in the process, compel social media intermediaries to act based on these findings.

Open-ended and undefined

In its landmark judgment in *Shreya Singhal vs Union of India* (2015), the Supreme Court, in striking down Section 66A of the IT Act, held that a law that limits speech can neither be vague nor over-broad. The amendment to the IT Rules suffers on both accounts. First, the notification fails to define fake news. Second, it allows the government's fact-check unit to make declarations on the veracity of any news "in respect of any business" that involves the state. The use of open-ended and undefined words, especially the use of the phrase "any business" – in a nation such as India, where the state has wide-ranging reach – indicates that the government will have an effective *carte blanche* to decide what each of us can see, hear, and read on the Internet.

Any workable and constitutionally committed campaign against fake news would have looked first towards a comprehensive parliamentary legislation on the matter. And a legislation emanating out of such a process would have tethered limitations on speech to the grounds stipulated in Article 19(2). It would have further ensured that the government cannot act as an arbiter of its own cause. In France, for example, where legislation exists to counter the spread of misinformation during elections, the declaration is made not by government but by an independent judge.

A proper, lawfully enacted statute would have also demanded a decision on whether a directive to remove misinformation is the only solution to fake news, or whether there are other, less restrictive alternatives available – for instance, in many cases, a government faced with what it believes is deceptive news always has the power to provide its own version of the facts, without calling for an erasure of other accounts.

The amendments to the IT Rules are not only a product of pure executive instruction but also eschew each one of these considerations. The consequences are chilling. Intermediaries faced with the threat of prosecution will naturally weed out information deemed false by the Fact Check Unit. It will only remain for the state to tell us what the truth is. The rights of the press, and indeed of the common person, to question authority, to speak truth to power, will be diminished, and our civil liberties obliterated.

India-UAE cooperation to sow regional food security

The United Arab Emirates (UAE), whose food security has been built on imports from global markets, is now focusing on the twin objectives of food access and readiness to confront supply chain crises. India, the world's second-largest food producer, is an essential partner in the UAE's ambition to strengthen food security. The India-UAE food security partnership stands to benefit from multiple points of convergence.

Abdulnasser Alshaali

is the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to India

Many capabilities

India has built its status as a global agri-export powerhouse using its vast tracts of arable land, a highly favourable climate, and a large and growing food production and processing sector. Along with serving global markets with its diversified agri-produce, India has, in recent years, acted as a humanitarian provider of food to developing countries, demonstrating awareness of its evolving role in advancing regional and global food security. India has also made major budgetary outlays towards setting up massive food parks, with due emphasis on modern supply chain management spanning farm gate to retail outlet. These investments, complemented by how India has placed its food sector to benefit from bilateral trade agreements, reflect the country's strong and sustained intent to make the most of its agri-capabilities in the global food marketplace.

In parallel, India runs the Public Distribution System, the world's largest food subsidy programme, providing nearly 800 million citizens with subsidised grains, providing its people with the reassurance of daily, affordable meals. Equally laudable is India's 'Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition (POSHAN) Abhiyaan', the world's largest nutrition programme for children and women. As a part of its G-20 presidency, India is promoting the consumption and farming of millets – nutritious, drought-resistant, sustainable, crops – that demonstrate the resilience focus that India offers to the global food security dialogue. In the realm of food security, India's G-20 presidency seeks to address the three Cs, of "Covid, Conflict, and Climate" (to borrow from India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's address last year), issues pernicious to food security in India and across the globe.

> Multiple points of convergence will ensure that India is an essential partner in the plan of the United Arab Emirates to strengthen food security in the Global South

What the UAE brings to the table

Seen together, India brings to the table an incredible wealth of food sector experience and the ability to operationalise the world's largest food supply chains – formidable capabilities that are strengthening the India-UAE food security partnership in a variety of ways. During the I2U2 (India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the United States) summit in July last year, the UAE committed $2 billion in investment towards constructing food parks in India (in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat), while the signing of a food security corridor on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)'s sidelines (with logistics partner DP World) has taken forward India's envisioned presence on the global food value chain, beyond the UAE.

The corridor could potentially commence a route for foods made and processed in India, beginning their outbound journey on the Indian coast of the Arabian Sea, passing through the UAE, and towards major international markets. With its ability to establish high volume trade of foods, the corridor stands to emerge as a world-class template of successful agri-trade for India, while also unlocking greater productivity, efficiency and growth for its millions of workers and employees.

For the UAE, the benefits go beyond maintaining and diversifying its food reserves, and trade linkages could enable the Emirates to leverage its strategically placed location between Asia and Europe to serve as India's food export gateway to West Asia and the Africa region, and further beyond. Given the food corridor's incredible commercial potential, several UAE-based companies have expressed interest in constructing a supporting logistics and infrastructure pipeline to accelerate trade and reinforce the food corridor.

The Dubai Multi Commodities Centre, the UAE's largest free trade zone, launched Agriota, an agri-trading and commodity platform to link Indian farmers to food companies in the UAE. Agriota gives millions of Indian farmers the opportunity to directly reach out to the entirety of the UAE's food ecosystem (processing companies, traders, wholesalers) and stock their products in Emirati stores. Alongside this initiative, a consortium of UAE-based entities are investing up to $7 billion in mega food parks, contract farming and the sourcing of agro-commodities in India. The initiative will include mega food parks, logistics and warehouse hubs, and fruits and vegetable hubs.

The benefits

There is much that India stands to gain from the UAE's private sector projects spanning its agricultural and food processing sector. Those projects will generate lakhs of non-farm agri-jobs, while enabling farmers to discover better prices for their products. Bolstered by the UAE's infrastructural capabilities, India's agricultural products will have more resilient and diversified pathways to the global marketplace.

India's G-20 presidency offers an opportune moment for both India and the UAE to showcase viable strategies and frameworks that can forge the basis of food security in the Global South. As it sets the global developmental agenda, India can look to leverage and strengthen trade pathways with the UAE to forge a sustainable, inclusive, efficient, and resilient future of food.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Court versus state

The remission of the 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano gang-rape and murder case is a dark moment in India's democracy (Page 1, "It's Bilkis today, it can be anybody tomorrow: SC", April 19). It is an unpardonable act on the part of the government to have granted them this. How could the severe trauma of the survivor and families have been ignored? The top court of the land needs to come down hard on the state especially after the state has said that "it was indeed applying its mind but was claiming privilege" — exemption from disclosing information.

A.P. Thiruvadi,
Chennai

These are times where the legislature and the executive are working hand in hand and a large section of the media also seems to be dancing to the tunes of the powers that be. One shudders to imagine what would happen if efforts are made to weaken the judiciary.

Syed Sultan Mohiddin,
Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh

This is an extraordinary case involving blood-chilling acts against women and children. The remission granted to the convicts is an act that has shocked many in the nation. This is also an issue that concerns the safety and rights of women.

A.G. Rajmohan,
Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh

Civil society organisations

It is true that civil society organisations in India have been facing challenges in recent years, restricting their ability to operate and also having a chilling effect on their work. Regarding the government's approach, it is not uncommon for governments to take a unilateral approach to decision-making. However, this approach can limit the scope for diverse perspectives, leading to decisions that may not be in the best interests of all stakeholders. It is important for the government to engage with civil society and consider their perspectives in decision-making.

Varadarajan C.M.,
Chennai

Heat literacy

The Editorial, "Tragic failure" (April 19), reminded me of an event during my schooldays, in the early 1960s. Rajaji was to address us and we had assembled in the open ground under a blazing sun. Rajaji arrived, saw our plight, just said "my blessings to you all", and walked away. We could only admire his empathy for us.

A.R. Ramanarayanan,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address.

Karnataka elections: which way now?

Considered as the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) bastion in South India, the Hindu Right's rise in Karnataka is the result of a systematic ideological campaign over the years by its various organisations with a message, "Hindu Navella Ondu" (Hindus are one).

As early as 1985, a "Dharm Sansad" in Karnataka's Udupi town had called for the opening of the Babri Masjid. Muslims and Christians are described as "anya Bharatiya" (the other Indians), or "anya komu" (the other religion) in parts of local media. And yet, even as a bastion, Karnataka is no Gujarat, whose key architect has been Narendra Modi as its Chief Minister (2001-2014).

In 2008, the BJP formed the government in Karnataka for the first time, but the party became the second largest party in the Assembly as early as 1994, the year it won 40 seats, a few more than the Congress party's 38 seats.

Disparate outcomes

In 2019 parliamentary elections, the BJP swept several States where it had lost in Assembly elections. In some instances, Indian voters do vote differently in Assembly elections as opposed to Parliament elections even if they are held simultaneously, as is the case in Odisha. But these disparate outcomes could also be partly explained by the nature of the BJP party's organisations at the State-level – often shaped by its state leadership.

Neither B.S. Yediyurappa nor Basavaraj Bommai could be compared to Mr. Modi on this score, which explains the key difference. Furthermore, both Mr. Yediyurappa and Mr. Bommai are dynasts, and have never had political appeal in the Hindu Right social base the way Mr. Modi has.

Since the early days, the BJP wanted to be recognised as a party with a difference. In the ongoing election campaign, it is attacked by rival parties as a "40% commission party".

Shaikh Mujibur Rehman

teaches at the Jamia Millia Central University, New Delhi. He is the author of a forthcoming book, *Shikwa-e Hind: Political Future of Indian Muslims*

When Mr. Yediyurappa faced the heat in the party for corruption charges in 2011, he chose to break away and formed a new party, Karnataka Janata Paksha (KJP). In the 2013 Assembly election, the KJP received 9.8% of the vote share and six seats.

Vulnerable to fragmentation

Mr. Yediyurappa's decision to revolt and the exit by former Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar and former deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi demolishes one big myth about the BJP's discipline. The party is indeed vulnerable to fragmentation like the Congress or the Left parties. It is, thus, possible that the BJP might split in the future, though it is not easy to predict precisely when or how. Moreover, the Congress party's decision to embrace disgruntled BJP leaders to its fold opens possibilities for its saffronisation – similar to the Gujarat Congress, which led to further consolidation of the Hindu majoritarianism in the State.

Just as the BJP is not a washing machine for corruption, the Congress party is not a washing machine for ideological purity.

The BJP has quite successfully returned to power recently in Gujarat, overcoming anti-incumbency, which it faces in Karnataka in a big way. Two things that helped the BJP in Gujarat may not work in Karnataka. Firstly, the Congress party gave a walk over to the BJP in Gujarat by orchestrating a self-destructive silent campaign, which is not the case with the D. Shivakumar-led Congress in Karnataka.

Secondly, in Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi converted the entire campaign in a direct fight between him and the Opposition parties, which is not the case in Karnataka. Moreover, the Nandini-Amul controversy is spreading unprecedented anti-Gujarati sentiments as well.

Among others, the BJP grapples with anti-incumbency in two ways. First, by putting up fresh faces, thus pre-empting electoral backlash against its dented candidates. More than 60 new faces have been fielded this time. Secondly, by adopting a polarisation strategy to alter the anti-incumbency narrative. Ever since the incumbent BJP government grabbed power in July 2019, the communal pot in Karnataka has been boiling. This is particularly true after Mr. Bommai took over as Chief Minister in 2021.

Polarisation strategy

The decision to withdraw 4% reservation for Muslims is part of this strategy – together with hijab and other issues. And yet, this polarisation strategy might not be able to neutralise such a high anti-incumbency this time. Similar strategies were deployed in Himachal Pradesh in 2022 by making the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) a big issue during the campaign, but it did not work. Such failures in their strategy to fight anti-incumbency (for instance, in Himachal Pradesh in 2022 or Rajasthan in 2018) has not discouraged the BJP from deploying it time and again.

The BJP has, once again, chosen not to field a single Muslim candidate in Karnataka despite the Prime Minister's announcement to reach out to Pasmanda Muslims recently.

Such deliberate exclusion of Muslim candidates from the electoral fray by the BJP represents an institutionalised form of polarisation strategy.

On May 13, if the results help elect a non-BJP government in Karnataka, it is likely that the new government might not last a complete term and might meet the fate of the H.D. Kumaraswamy government. The message from the hegemonic BJP to Indian voters seems to be: no matter who you elect, the BJP would form the government.

This is a sad irony for a country that would like to be globally applauded as a mother of democracy.

Deliberate exclusion of Muslim candidates from the electoral fray by the BJP represents an institutionalised form of polarisation strategy

The menace of paper leaks in Gujarat

Recruitments are marred by the fact that they are manned by the ruling party

STATE OF PLAY

Mahesh Langa
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On April 16, the Bhavnagar Police in Gujarat lodged a first-hand information (FIR), busting a State-wide racket that provides dummy (or imposter) candidates for attending government recruitment exams and board examinations on behalf of other candidates in the State.

So far, the police have arrested six persons, including four masterminds out of which three are government employees, and two others who have been arrested are also government employees, who had appeared as imposter candidates.

In the FIR, the police have booked 36 persons and stated that the accused used to charge from ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh for finding a dummy and facilitate entry of that dummy into the examination hall for taking the examination on behalf of the original candidate. The dummy candidates were paid ₹25,000 per paper.

The police have claimed that the racket in Bhavnagar flourished since 2012.

In fact, for more than a decade, with almost dozen instance of paper leaks of different recruitment exams, the State's recruitment exams have been marred with controversies regarding paper leaks, corruption or rigging the recruitment. Since 2015, the State, which boasts about its governance and administrative acumen, has not been able to hold even one recruitment exam without a paper leak controversy.

To deal with the menace, the State government, this year, enacted a special law to

curb the activities of paper leaks and restore the sanctity in the recruitment process. The Gujarat Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill, 2023, has prescribed maximum punishment of 10 years of imprisonment and fine not less than ₹1 crore for indulging in "organised crime" of paper leak. According to the Bill, its provisions are applicable to examinations conducted by various agencies in the State.

"It is the need of the hour to bring a stringent law against paper leak. Due to the absence of a special law, accused in paper leak cases were taking advantage of loopholes in the prevalent law," Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghvi said, while introducing the Bill in the State Assembly.

The State government was prompted to bring the law after it came under severe flak following a paper leak in the recruitment for the junior clerk exam in January this year. The exam was called off leading to State-wide protests by youth. A total of 9.5 lakh aspirants were to take the recruitment examination for 1,181 vacant positions.

In the last decade, recruitment exams were cancelled for chief officer of municipality, teachers in government schools, clerks for district panchayats and State administration, forest guards, and even nurses for the health department after paper leaks.

Last year, in its report, the Gujarat State Law Commission (GSLC), in a severe indictment of the State government, had recommended bringing a stringent law to curb the menace of paper leak in recruitment exams.

Headed by former Supreme Court judge M.B. Shah, the Commission had stated that "rampantly increasing incidents of paper leak in recruitment exams in Gujarat is creating difficulty amongst youth who seriously prepare for such exams".

"One of the reasons behind paper leaks is the involvement of influential people in the State government, but unfortunately they are never caught," the report stated.

According to Gujarat Congress spokesperson Manish Doshi, who has been tracking recruitment exams conducted by various State entities, all agencies recruiting the staff are corrupt. "In Gujarat, people linked to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are appointed heads of various recruitment agencies. They are involved in the rigging. All recruitment agencies are epicentres of corruption in the State," Mr. Doshi said.

Giving the example of the RSS/BJP-affiliated people manning the recruitment agencies, Mr. Doshi said former Ahmedabad Mayor Asit Vora was the chairman of the Gujarat Subordinate Services Selection Board (GSSSB), which had conducted the exam for head clerks in which the paper was leaked. Mr. Vora had to resign after the exam was cancelled.

The State needs to strengthen its agencies in charge of recruitment by appointing professionals instead of manning them with ruling party functionaries.

World's largest producer of milk hits a dry patch

Milk prices are ruling high as supply is constrained by lumpy skin disease and high fodder costs

DATA POINT

Jasmin Nihalani

In March 2022, a full-cream packet of Amul milk cost ₹60/litre. The one-litre pouch now costs ₹66. Since 2021, milk prices in India have been on a boil. Prices have been hiked across brands and the recent hike in February 2023 was Amul's fifth increase since 2021.

In April 2023, the average price for a litre of milk in India was ₹57, which is about 12% higher than ₹51 in April 2022. The average milk price is the highest in Lucknow and Guwahati at ₹66/litre and ₹65/litre, respectively. Southern cities such as Bengaluru and Chennai have relatively lower milk prices.

In the past year, Ernakulam saw the highest rise in milk prices at 19%, followed by Mumbai, Lucknow and Jaipur which saw over 10% rise. **Chart 1** shows the average retail price for a litre of milk in the month of April for the past six years.

The Central Bank's monetary policy committee, which met in the first week of April, said in a statement that high inflation in milk was one of the reasons driving retail inflation. While retail inflation slowed to 5.66% in March, milk inflation continued to tread higher. In the same month, milk inflation was at 9.24%, close to the levels last seen in February 2015. **Chart 2** shows the retail inflation and inflation in milk (liquid, litre) since January 2015.

At the same time, there have been concerns over the country's stagnant milk production in FY23. On April 5, Secretary for Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajesh Kumar Singh said the country was facing stagnation and that the government would consider all options, including the import of butter and ghee if the situation remained unchanged.

However, days later, the Union Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala contradicted him and ruled out stagnation in milk production and the government's decision to consider import of butter and ghee.

In FY22, India produced 221 million tonnes of milk, about 5.3% higher than in FY21. While there has been a rise in the absolute quantity of milk produced, the y-o-y growth has slowed. It peaked at 6.6% in FY18. **Chart 3** shows the milk produced (in million tonnes) and the y-o-y growth.

According to Mr. Singh, the country's milk production in FY23 would either be stagnant or grow at 1%-2%. Multiple factors have resulted in the stagnation of the country's milk production. Initially, dairy farmers faced a demand slump due to COVID-19. As demand recovered, the outbreak of lumpy skin disease hit the cattle and buffalo herd, resulting in lower milk yields. High prices of fodder have also raised the cost of production.

According to an answer in the Lok Sabha, 32.8 lakh cattle were affected by the disease and 1.86 lakh succumbed to the disease. Rajasthan, the second largest producer of milk, saw the highest number of cases and cattle deaths. Close to 50% or 15 lakh cases and 76,000 cattle deaths were reported in Rajasthan, as shown in **Map 4**. While the fodder inflation based on the wholesale price index eased to 17.13% in March, the figure has remained in double digits for 14 months now, as shown in **Chart 5**.

Finally, coming to Mr. Singh's remarks about the possibility of import of dairy products, it must be noted that India is the largest producer of milk in the world and accounts for 24% of the milk produced worldwide. As shown in **Chart 6**, India last imported a significant quantity of milk in FY12. Since then, milk imports have slumped. While India continues to import whey, butter, cheese and curd in relatively higher quantities, the share of milk in India's import basket is significantly lower.

Dearer dairy

The charts are based on data collated from the National Dairy Development Board, the Department of Consumer Affairs, the Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation and the Commerce Ministry

Chart 1: The chart shows the average retail price for a litre of milk in the month of April for the past six years

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Average	42	43	46	49	51	57
Srinagar						
Shimla	30				50	55
Gurugram						56
Delhi	42		46		50	53
Jaipur						50
Patna						52
Lucknow				51	58	66
Kolkata						
Guwahati	56			62		65
Ahmedabad	48					58
Mumbai	43					58
Bhopal						58
Hyderabad						52
Bengaluru						43
Chennai						40
Ernakulam					47	56

Chart 2: The chart shows the retail inflation and inflation in milk since January 2015 (in %)

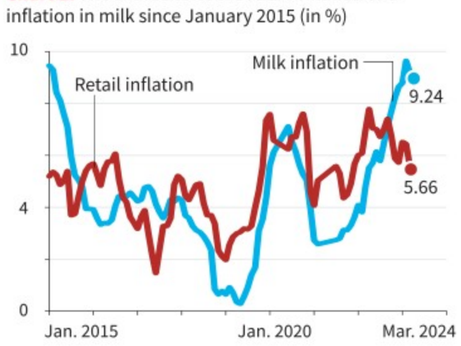
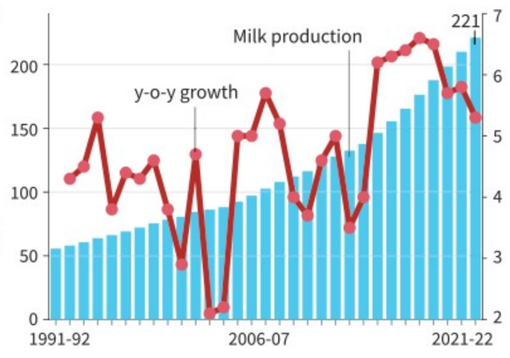


Chart 3: The chart shows the quantity of milk produced (in million tonnes) on the left-axis and the y-o-y growth (in %) on the right-axis



Map 4: The map shows the cases and deaths due to lumpy skin disease

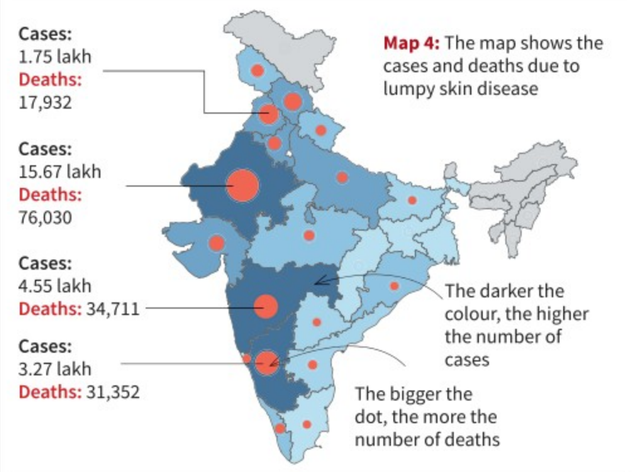

Cases: 1.75 lakh
Deaths: 17,932
Cases: 15.67 lakh
Deaths: 76,030
Cases: 4.55 lakh
Deaths: 34,711
Cases: 3.27 lakh
Deaths: 31,352
The darker the colour, the higher the number of cases
The bigger the dot, the more the number of deaths

Chart 5: The chart shows the fodder inflation based on the wholesale price index (in %)

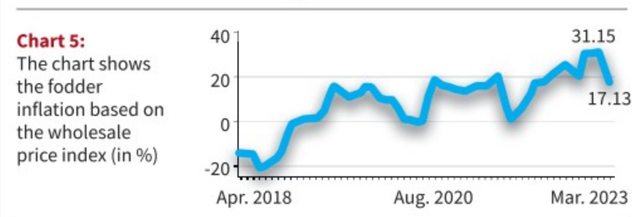
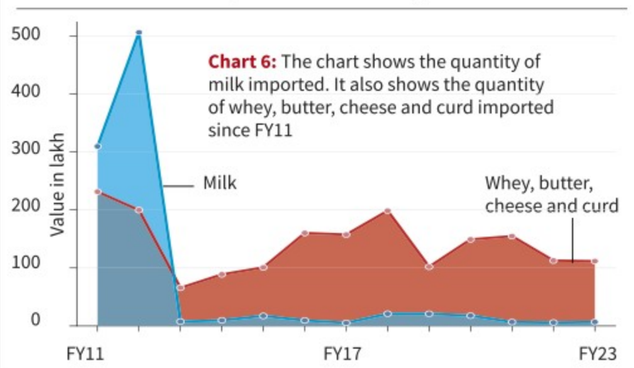


Chart 6: The chart shows the quantity of milk imported. It also shows the quantity of whey, butter, cheese and curd imported since FY11



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 20, 1973

Three chances for IAS candidates

New Delhi, April 18: It has been decided by the Government of India, in consultation with the State Governments and the Union Public Service Commission, that the number of chances for the Indian Administrative Services examination to be held in September-October, 1973, be increased from two to three for the three categories of services: Indian Administrative Service/Indian Foreign Service; Indian Police Service and other Class II Police Services; and Central Services Class I and II. The notice for the Indian Administrative Service examination to be held in September-October, 1973, has already been issued by the Union Public Service Commission on March 10, 1973. The rules for the examination have also been notified by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms in the Gazette of India dated March 10, 1973. The candidates desirous of appearing at the Indian Administrative Service and other examinations may obtain the application form from the office of the Union Public Service Commission on a payment of one rupee. The closing date for the receipt of applications in the office of the Commission is May 7, 1973. The decision to allow three chances in the IAS and other examinations to be held this year is a purely transitional measure. The final position will be known next year when the question of any changes required in the examination for other services will be examined.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 20, 1923

Egyptian situation

London, April 19: Official circles in London have no information in regard to the alarmist rumour that a revolt is imminent in Egypt. They point out that what is occurring in Egypt is apparently a dispute between the King and his Cabinet in which Britain does not participate. Apart from four points reserved for when Egyptian independence is declared, Egyptians are free to form their own Constitution and, as far as is known, it is believed that the Cabinet is making progress in the matter. Indeed, a draft constitution has existed for some time. Britain's rights in Egypt are protected by power to declare martial law, which will be retained until the Egyptian Government passes an Indemnity Act covering the operations of the war.

From Page One

India's population to go past China by 2023: UN

Imposition of such targets can lead to imbalanced sex ratios, preferential health and nutrition for male children, denial of the paternity of girl children, violence against women for giving birth to girl children, and coercion of women to have fewer or greater numbers of children.

"With close to 50% of its population below the age of 25, India has a time-bound opportunity to benefit from the demographic dividend," and that it must convert this into "economic benefits through additional investments in health, education, and quality jobs for young people – including targeted investments in women and girls."

'Have informed States of same-sex marriage case'

On Tuesday, Mr. Mehta handed over to the Bench copies of the Centre's letters to the Chief Secretaries. Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, heading the five-judge Constitution Bench, without commenting any further, said it is "excellent" that the Centre has informed the States.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, for petitioners, however, chose to vocally protest the Centre's move. He said the Centre's letter to the States was dated April 18. The Supreme Court had issued notice in the case five months ago. "It is totally unnecessary to do this now," Mr. Rohatgi said.

He said the petitioners have limited their petitions to a challenge of a central law, the Special Marriage Act of 1954. They have only sought from the court a broader interpretation of the 1954 Act to make it gender-neutral so that same sex partners could exercise their right to get married. "It is absolutely wrong for the Centre to argue that just because the subject is in the Concurrent List, all the States have to be heard," he submitted.

"You need not labour on this, Mr. Rohatgi," the CJI observed.

SC Collegium recalls CJ's transfer proposal

"The recommendation has remained pending with the Government of India since then without any response. Justice Muralidhar now demits office on August 7 leaving less than four months' time. In view of this delay, the resolution recommending the transfer of Justice S. Muralidhar is recalled," the Supreme Court Collegium resolved.

The Collegium said the Madras High Court has remained without a permanent Chief Justice for over six months and recommended the appointment of Justice S.V. Gangapurwala, the senior-most judge in the Bombay High Court, as the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court.

The Collegium said the current Acting Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, T. Raja, be transferred as a judge of the Rajasthan High Court.

"The Collegium resolves that the transfer of Justice T. Raja as a judge of the High Court of Rajasthan be effectuated at the earliest. His continuation even as a judge of the Madras High Court cannot be an impediment to the appointment of Justice S.V. Gangapurwala as the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court," the Collegium recommended to the government.

Justice Raja is currently the senior-most puisne judge of the Madras High Court. He was originally recommended for transfer to Rajasthan in November 2022. But he had sought a reconsideration of the transfer, but the Collegium had affirmed its recommendation.

The Collegium has further recommended the senior-most judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, Justice S.V. Bhatti, as the new Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court. He is currently serving in the Kerala High Court as its senior-most judge.

The Collegium has proposed Justice Ramesh D. Dhanuka for appointment as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Bombay. Again, the Collegium has suggested Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao, who is the senior-most among puisne judges originating from the Telangana High Court, for appointment as Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh. "Telangana has no representation among Chief Justices of the High Courts," the Collegium said.

More age-appropriate ratings for films soon

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday cleared the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2023 that has provisions for harsher punishments for film piracy and introduction of new age categories for classifying films, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said.

The Bill, whose current form has not been released yet, will be introduced in the Monsoon Session of Parliament.

A draft version of the Bill circulated in 2021 provided for up to three years of imprisonment and ₹10-lakh penalty for those engaged in film piracy.

Mr. Thakur said the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) would be able to provide more age classifications for certifying films. Only three categories now exist: U for unrestricted exhibition, U/A for films that can be viewed by minors with adult supervision, and A for films that can be viewed by adults.

The 2021 draft Bill expanded the U/A category to U/A 7+, U/A 13+ and U/A 16+.

State cannot discriminate against individuals over sexuality, says SC

The Bench, led by CJI Chandrachud, says state cannot push aside the need for legal recognition of same-sex marriage within LGBTQIA+community as an 'urban and elitist' concept; petitioners claim calling them elitists is unfair view of govt.

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

> ...It is also an argument in response to the contention that this is all very elitist or urban or biased in favour of a particular class
>
> **JUSTICE D.Y. CHANDRACHUD**
> Chief Justice of India

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said sexual orientation is an innate characteristic over which individuals have no control and the state cannot push aside the need for legal recognition of same-sex marriage within the LGBTQIA+ community as an "urban and elitist" concept without any data to support the claim. The Centre has dismissed petitions seeking legal status for same-sex marriage as an elitist push made by a few influential people.

It has said that these petitioners do not reflect the views of the rural, semi-rural and a majority of the urban population of India, who accept marriage as an exclusively heterosexual institution. "But the state cannot discriminate against individuals on the basis of a characteristic [sexual orientation] over which they have no control," Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud remarked.

Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi advocate Shadan Farasat, arguing for gay couple Utkarsh Saxena and Ananya Kotia, said their clients have suffered "discriminatory exclusion" only on the basis of their sex and sexual orientation, which is intrinsic to their identity.

"When you say that this is an intrinsic or innate characteristic, it is also an argument in response to the government's contention that this is all very elitist or urban or biased in favour of a particular class... It may be more urban in its manifestation because more people from the urban areas of this country are coming out of the closet," the CJI observed.

'No data forthcoming'

The Chief Justice also underscored that the government has shown no data whatsoever that same-sex attraction is a solely "urban characteristic". "There is no data forthcoming from the government," he said.

Senior advocate K.V. Vishwanathan intervened to say that the government's claim that only elite people have approached the court was "absolutely without grace".

"My client, Zainab Patel, a transgender person, was thrown out of her house and had to beg on the streets. Through her own efforts she rose in the world. She is now a director with KPMG and a member of the National Council for Transgender Persons. The government itself has nominated her," he said.

Senior advocate Jayna Kothari said the petitioner she represents in the case, Akkai Padmashali, a trans activist, was also forced to leave home at the age of 15 to make her way in the world. "The people who have approached this court come from working class backgrounds, to say they are elitists is unfair on the part of the government," she said.

Mr. Singhvi said "social values projected by the government cannot trump equal treatment".

The Special Marriage Act, which the petitioners want to be made gender-neutral so that they can marry, was meant to be an "alternative to unpopular marriages" which do not answer to the socially, culturally and legally ingrained concept of marriage. The senior lawyer said the government "hoists with its own petard" when it argues that "marriage is a vital institution". "Yes, it is because marriage is a vital institution that we, the excluded community, want all the indices of marriage which comes with marriage... We too want the security of marriage. We too see marriage as a gateway to avail the legal protections of law in tax, inheritance, adoption, etc.," Mr. Singhvi said.

CBI files case against Oxfam India, holds office search

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday conducted searches at the New Delhi office of Oxfam India, following registration of a case against the organisation and its office-bearers alleging violation of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). Listing the alleged violations, the FIR said the email communication found during an Income-Tax survey showed that Oxfam India had been planning to pressure the government for renewal of FCRA registration through "foreign governments and institutions".

"Oxfam India has the reach and influence to request multilateral foreign organisations to intervene on its behalf with the government. This exposed Oxfam India as a probable instrument of foreign policy of foreign organisations/entities which have funded Oxfam India liberally over the years," it said.

Indians stuck in Sudan say no power, food supply in hotels they are staying

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

A man inside a house in Khartoum during the clash between the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces and the Army. REUTERS

Shortage of electricity, food and water and indiscriminate firing and bombing are the main threats that Indians are facing in Sudan that is caught in a conflict between the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF).

The Hindu was told of the ground reality in Sudan by several stranded Indians against the backdrop of a testy exchange on social media between External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar and former Karnataka Chief Minister and Congress leader Siddaramaiah regarding the condition of Indian nationals in Sudan.

Sources on Wednesday said the Ministry and the Embassy of India in Sudan were "continuously monitoring" the developments in the crisis-torn African country and that the authorities were in touch with the "The Quartet" countries – the U.S., the U.K., Saudi Arabia and UAE – to ensure the safety of Indian nationals in Sudan.

"Our hotel is without electricity for five days. Food and water are in short supply. Earlier today, the hotel was looted by the paramilitary forces. Most of Khartoum has been without electricity as well and the paramilitary has not been allowing repairs," an Indian national said over telephone from the Sudanese capital.

He said that looting by the paramilitary side was a major problem and urged the government to ensure safety of Indians through international mediation.

Another frequent traveller to Sudan said he walked several kilometres after the airport became a scene of clashes between the two sides and took refuge in a hotel which has now run out of power and has resorted to rationing of food. "The bombing and shooting continues from early morning till late night. The Sudanese Armed Forces were strong in the capital and now the Rapid Support Forces which had a base outside the capital is trying to gain an upper hand. Soon we will not be able to charge our phones anymore and we can't even think of venturing out because of the fighting," said the traveller.

"The External Affairs Minister has spoken to counterparts in Saudi Arabia and UAE. Both have assured their practical support on the ground. Our Ambassador in Washington and High Commissioner in London are in touch with their respective host Governments. We are also working with the UN," an informed source has said.

The Ministry earlier set up a dedicated Control Room (toll-free number 1800118797) for the nearly 1,500 Indian nationals who are caught in multiple locations across Sudan.

An Indian national who spoke to *The Hindu* from Khartoum urged the Government of India to engage with Russia as the Sudanese Armed Forces are known to have good ties with Moscow.

SC sets aside Bombay HC order discharging ex-professor Saibaba

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

G.N. Saibaba

The Supreme Court on Wednesday set aside a Bombay High Court decision to discharge former Delhi University professor G.N. Saibaba in a UAPA case linking him with Maoist groups.

A Bench led by Justice M.R. Shah referred the case back to the High Court for a fresh look on merits. The State of Maharashtra had appealed the Supreme Court against the High Court order of October 2022. A Sessions Court had sentenced him to life imprisonment in 2017. The High Court had agreed with Mr. Saibaba's appeal that the Sessions Court had framed charges and tried him without obtaining sanction from the Union government as mandated under Section 45(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

On Wednesday, the Bench requested the Bombay High Court's Chief Justice, in the observance of propriety, to place the case for hearing before another Bench, and not the one which had discharged him.

The apex court urged the High Court to consider and decide the case expeditiously, preferably within four months. The court said it would be open for the State to argue in the High Court that once the accused had been convicted by the Sessions Court at the conclusion of a trial, the validity of sanction cannot be gone into by the appellate court.

Senior advocates Nitya Ramakrishnan and R. Basant, for Mr. Saibaba, said they should be allowed to counter the arguments of the State in the High Court.

Discussing MoU with India for training, cooperation on electric propulsion: U.K. CDS

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Admiral Tony Radakin

The United Kingdom is keen to help India develop maritime electric-propulsion technology for its future warships and both sides have held two rounds of discussions on how to take this forward, according to the U.K.'s top military officer. The two sides are also discussing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on military training, said Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) of U.K., who was on a three-day visit to India which concluded on Wednesday.

"One of the topics under debate at the moment is a training memorandum of understanding which would allow the U.K. and Indian forces to have this training ethos and basis for us to come together in the future. And that's across all domains, land, air, and maritime," Adm. Radakin said speaking to a select group of journalists. "And then the final piece, is the other domains in terms of space and cyber. The U.K. is proud of being a joint force where maritime air and land work together and we're looking to more strongly include space and cyber domains."

Giving an overview of the conversation during his visit, the visiting Admiral, referring to defence industry cooperation and India's Make in India effort, talked about how the U.K. contribute to it. "There are lots of ways and they're exciting ways. The sharing of maritime electric propulsion. We've been on that journey for 20 years, so can we help India to accelerate and know everything that we've learned over the last 20 years? We are doing that. Various working groups have come to India we've had a working group in U.K.," he stated.

Further, on the ongoing discussions on jet engine capabilities, we're talking about something incredibly exciting where the prospect of having Indian engines in Indian jets assisted by the U.K. technology, which is at the very leading edge of the world in terms of jet engines, Adm. Radakin said.

Rajnath wants disengagement, de-escalation process over Ladakh stand-off to continue

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during an exhibition at the Army Commanders' Conference at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi. PTI

The ongoing talks between India and China for peaceful resolution of the standoff in Eastern Ladakh will continue and the best way forward is "disengagement and de-escalation", said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, addressing the Army Commanders Conference on Wednesday.

"It is our 'Whole-of-Government' approach to ensure availability of best weapons, equipment and clothing to our troops braving extreme weather and hostile forces to defend our territorial integrity," Mr. Singh said addressing the first edition of the biannual ACC which began on Monday.

The two sides are expected to hold the 18th round of Corps Commander-level talks very soon to take forward the dialogue.

On the situation along the western borders, Mr. Singh, talking of the Army's response to cross-border terrorism, said proxy war by the adversary continues. "The synergised operations in Jammu and Kashmir are contributing to increased stability and peace and the same should continue, and for this I again compliment the Indian Army," he said referring to the joint efforts by Central Armed Police Forces, police and the Army.

Stating that unconventional and asymmetric warfare will be part of the future conventional wars, the Minister added, "Cyber, information, communication, trade and finance have all become an inseparable part of future conflicts. This necessitates that armed forces will have to keep all these facets in consideration while formulating strategies".

Shah calls for 'ruthless action' against drug dealers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Wednesday that someone who consumes drugs is a victim and the one who deals in drugs is a criminal and the latter need to be dealt with firmly and ruthlessly.

The Union Minister said the battle against drugs has to be fought by rising above party politics and political ideology.

At the first National Conference of Heads of Anti-Narcotics Task Force of States and Union Territories, he said the government had launched a multi-pronged fight against narcotics and "India will be drug-free by 2047" .

Mr. Shah said that the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS) and provision to confiscate property of drug traders were two important tools.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) said that in 2022, it conducted probe in 33 cases in which property worth ₹17 crore was frozen.

BJP fuelling rumours that Ajit Pawar is going to defect: NCP

The Opposition leader and saffron party have not had any contact, says Maharashtra BJP unit president Chandrashekar Bawankule

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party is fuelling speculation of a split in the Nationalist Congress Party even after Ajit Pawar clarified his position, NCP national spokesperson Clyde Crasto said on Wednesday.

Mr. Crasto said Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde must ask the BJP why it was trying to put so much pressure on him and his Shiv Sena.

"Even after Ajit *dada* Pawar clarified his position yesterday, the BJP is sowing news in the media through its sources. Eknath Shinde*ji* and his group must ask @BJP4India why they are trying to put so much pressure on them," he said in a tweet.

Mr. Ajit Pawar on Tuesday categorically denied speculation about his defection to the BJP and said

Ajit Pawar

that the 'NCP was a family' which would keep working under party president Sharad Pawar's leadership.

Mr. Ajit Pawar also denied news reports that he had allegedly taken the signatures of 40 NCP MLAs with whom he would split the NCP and join the ruling dispensation.

NCP chief Sharad Pawar also dismissed the speculation about his nephew and said the latter was busy with the party's work and there was no need for the media to drag the issue.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra BJP chief Chandrashekar Bawankule said that Mr. Ajit Pawar had not made any contact with the saffron party or vice versa. "No such proposal has come to the BJP. There is no discussion. Ajit Pawar has made no contact with the BJP and the party is also not in touch with him," Mr. Bawankule clarified.

He said the BJP would not do anything to damage the reputation of the NCP leader and "Mr. Ajit Pawar must himself find out who was raising a question mark on his leadership."

Mr. Bawankule blamed Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut for triggering speculation on Mr. Ajit Pawar. However, the BJP leader said that any person who wanted to join the party, would be welcomed. "The doors of the party are open for everyone who works for the country and believes in BJP's ideology," he said.

Trinamool tries to distance itself from veteran Mukul Roy

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

With veteran Trinamool Congress leader Mukul Roy in New Delhi and insisting on meeting top Bharatiya Janata Party leaders Union Home Minister Amit Shah and party president J.P. Nadda, the West Bengal party has tried to distance itself from him.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said that Mr. Roy remained a BJP MLA. "It is a small matter [Mukul Roy's visit to New Delhi]. It is better to ignore. His son has filed a missing case that is a serious matter," she said.

Speaking to a Bengali news channel in New Delhi, Mr. Roy said he had come to Delhi out of his own free will and he would try to meet top BJP leaders so that he could work for the party. Mr. Roy looked a little out of sync when asked about his next plans. "It is high time somebody stood up against the CPI (M)," he said.

When reminded that he had joined the Trinamool, the 69-year-old politician said, "One cannot defeat Trinamool Congress while remaining in the Trinamool." Mr. Roy admitted that he had not informed his family of his trip.

"I was not keeping well for quite some time, so I was away from politics. But right now, I am fine and would again be active in politics," he said, adding that he was "100% confident that he would never be associated with the Trinamool Congress".

Trinamool spokespersons too tried to distance the party from Mukul Roy.

"Mukul Roy is not such an issue for us. BJP can do whatever it likes," party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said. Another spokesperson Santanu Sen said that it appeared that Mukul Roy is "not physically and mentally fit and he is not sure of what he is saying".

Mr. Roy, one of the founding members of the Trinamool, was the second most important leader of the party till 2017 when he joined the BJP. He returned to Trinamool in 2021 a month after he was elected MLA on BJP ticket.

INBRIEF

Accused in Atiq Ahmed's murder sent to police remand

A Prayagraj court on Wednesday sent the three accused in the murder of Uttar Pradesh gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed and his brother Khalid Azim alias Ashraf to four-day police custody. Earlier, five police officers, including the station in-charge of Shahganj Police Station, Ashwani Kumar Singh, were suspended for "negligence" while taking Ahmed and his brother for a medical check-up when they were killed by the accused on April 15.

Mamata says she did not call Shah on national party status

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday denied the allegations made by Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari that she called Union Home Minister Amit Shah after her party lost national party status. Ms. Banerjee said that she would resign as Chief Minister if proved that she had called Mr. Shah on the issue. Raising questions on the issue, she said, "Can the Election Commission do anything that the BJP wants? As per the system of recognising national parties, the status is reviewed every 10 years. The last review for our party was done in 2016. But they didn't even wait till the 2024 elections".

Did Jatin Mehta get 'protection' over Adani link, asks Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Keeping up its attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's relationship with industralist Gautam Adani, the Congress accused the Centre of letting diamond merchant Jatin Mehta flee the country and asked whether he was provided "protection" due to his connection with Mr. Adani.

Addressing a press conference here, party spokesperson Supriya Shrinate alleged that Mr. Mehta had swindled ₹7,000 crore from Indian banks. "He not just fled the country but also took citizenship of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Caribbean, and a 'No Objection Certificate' was issued by the Indian government. Drawing parallels with other fraud accused such as Mehul Choksi and Nirav Modi, Ms. Shrinate said, that Mr. Mehta also employed similar *modus operandi*.

"He too imported gold on the basis of letters of credit from Indian banks. They made it into jewellery and this jewellery was then exported to Dubai. It is shocking that the 13 companies to which this jewellery was exported in Dubai were eventually all owned by Jatin Mehta and his family," she added.

"Actually, that money was swindled by Jatin Mehta and family. That money belongs to honest taxpayers of this country... it's the money for which the ED and the CBI should be running from pillar to post but nothing is happening on that," she alleged.

'Lingayats backing BJP because of the party's work'

Laxman Savadi and Jagadish Shettar left the party because for them, their personal ambition is more important than what the BJP wants to do; they sacrificed four decades of party ideology and jumped to the Congress; Shettar and Congress are like chalk and cheese, the Union Minister says

INTERVIEW

Rajeev Chandrasekhar

Nistula Hebbar

Ahead of the Karnataka Assembly election on May 10, Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar speaks on defections from the BJP, ties with the Lingayat community and the party's prospects.

The BJP has been facing rebellion after the list of candidates was declared, notably by senior leaders like Jagadish Shettar and Laxman Savadi. How do you see this and what impact will it have on the BJP's prospects?

Our party is one that believes in giving openings and breaks to *karyakartas* and youngsters. In this election, we are giving ticket to 74 new faces. The consequence of that vision obviously conflicts with an existing leader who wants to continue with the status quo. Usually, in the case of many senior leaders, there is understanding of the party's vision and they step aside allowing new people to take the candidature. In the case of Savadi and Shettar, their personal ambition was more important than what the party wanted to do. They sacrificed four decades of party ideology and jumped into the Congress. Jagadish

Shettar in the Congress is as chalk and cheese as you can get, for example – the incident at the Idgah Maidan, the Ram Mandir issue, appeasement politics of the Congress, the promise of the Congress to roll back the reservation given to Lingayats and give it back to Muslims – how he will manage to navigate this maze of contradictions and hypocrisy, he only has to answer.

Doesn't their joining the Congress somewhat ameliorate the narrative of hurt sentiments between the Lingayat community and the Congress?

With great respect, I would like to say that the trust between the Lingayat community and the BJP is because of the work done by the party for and with the community.

That won't change because two leaders are disgruntled with the leadership of the party. Our relationship with communities and people of Karnataka is deeper and built around fundamental principles of ideology and work rather than a leader saying that he is bringing 10,000 supporters to the party who leaves the party when he does as it happens with the Congress. In fact we have done a study that shows us that 80% of the contribution to a winning candidate in the Congress is his/her own efforts as an individual, in the BJP however, it is about what we represent and what we do as a party. Also, if you go back to 2018, the games that the Congress played with the Lingayat community are clear, trying to declare them a separate religion, all the games that (former Chief Minister) Siddaramaiah did and for which D.K. Shivakumar had to apologise.

But you have also spoken of polarising issues such as Hijab, Tipu Sultan.

For that Yediyurappa*ji*, the tallest leader in the State, has said that this is not talk for this election, we will talk of development and roads etc.

But your State unit president Nalin Kateel said development was not important, only Hindu consciousness was.

He said it in a particular context in his constituency, but if you look at our advertisements, our social media material, our television commercials, our electoral narrative is about the work of the government; otherwise Hijab etc. would have reflected in our campaign material.

(For full interview go to: bit.ly/ministerrajeev)

Court quashes J&K scribe's detention under PSA

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has quashed the detention of journalist Fahad Shah, 34, under the Public Safety Act (PSA), saying that the apprehension of an adverse impact to public order is a mere surmise of the detaining authority. "A mere apprehension of a breach of law and order is not sufficient to meet the standard of adversely affecting the 'maintenance of public order'," it observed.

The judge said there were no reports of unrest since the detenu was released on bail on January 8, 2021 and detained with effect from June 26, 2021.

"The nature of the allegations against the detenu is grave. However, the personal liberty of an accused cannot be sacrificed on the altar of preventive detention merely because a person is implicated in a criminal proceeding," the court observed.

TIRUNELVELI CORPORATION
National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) & Namakku Naame Thittam 2022-23
15th Central Finance Commission Grand Fund 2021-22
E-TENDER NOTICE 03/2023-24

1.	Tender Inviting Authority Designation, Address	Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Tirunelveli.			
2.	Name of Work:	Description	No. of Works	Project Cost Rs. in Crore	EMD Amount Rs. in Lakhs
		Building Works	4	2.34	2.34
		Rejuvenation and beautification of water body	2	1.95	1.95
		Purchase of Vehicles (SWM)	6	9.35	9.35
		UGD work	1	0.475	4.75
3.	Web site Address	https://tntenders.gov.in (Tender document available from the above web site at free of cost)			
4.	Date and Time for the Bid document available	From 21.04.2023 10.00 AM to 08.05.2023 3.00 PM			
5.	Due date and time for submission of bids	From 21.04.2023 10.00 AM to 08.05.2023 3.00 PM			
6.	Place, Date and time of opening of bids	Tirunelveli Corporation Main Office. 08.05.2023 at 3.30 pm			

DIPR / 2179 / TENDER / 2023
Commissioner
Tirunelveli Corporation
" சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம்"

TAMIL NADU NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY
(A University established by Tamil Nadu Act No.9 of 2012)
Navalurkuttappattu, Dindigul Main Road, Tiruchirappalli - 620 027, Tamil Nadu, India
Phone Off : 0431 - 2692101 E-mail : vicechancellor@tnnlu.ac.in Website : www.tnnlu.ac.in

INVITATION OF APPLICATIONS/NOMINATIONS FOR THE POST OF VICE-CHANCELLOR

The post of **Vice-Chancellor** of **Tamil Nadu National Law University (TNNLU), Tiruchirappalli** will fall vacant shortly. The Search Committee set up under the **Tamil Nadu National Law University Act, 2012** now invites applications/nominations from eminent academicians in the field of Law who are interested to serve **TNNLU** as its **Vice-Chancellor,** not later than Saturday, the **20th May, 2023.** For further details see **www.tnnlu.ac.in**

DIPR/ 384/DISPLAY/2023 " சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம் " **Search Committee**

भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, अंतरिक्ष विभाग / DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
विक्रम साराभाई अंतरिक्ष केंद्र / VIKRAM SARABHAI SPACE CENTRE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण ग्रुप / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP
तिरुवनंतपुरम / THIRUVANANTHAPURAM - 22. (फोन नं./ Ph. No. 0471 – 2564568 / 5669 / 4537 / 4545)

ई-निविदा की अवधि बढ़ाना / EXTENSION OF E-TENDER

1. इन्स्टेप, वीएसएससी, तुंबा में विद्युत प्रणाली सब-स्टेशन का संवर्धन (सिविल कार्य) / Augmentation of Energy System Substation at INSTEF, VSSC, Thumba (Civil Works), **NIT No. VSSC/CMG/C01/32/2022-23 Dt. 27.02.2023**

डाउनलोड करने की अवधि/Period for downloading	दिनांक 27.04.2023 को 23:00 बजे तक बढ़ाए गए/Extended upto 23:00 hrs on 27.04.2023
निविदाओं की प्राप्ति / Receipt of tenders	दिनांक 02.05.2023 को 23:00 बजे तक बढ़ाए गए/Extended upto 23:00 hrs. on 02.05.2023

योग्यता मानदंड तथा अन्य ब्यौरों को पाने के लिए इच्छुक निविदाकार ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करते हुए विस्तृत सूचना (ई-एनआइटी) का अवलोकन करें, जिसे www.tenderwizard.in/ISRO से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। Interested tenderers may please refer detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (E-NIT) for eligibility criteria and other details, which can be downloaded from website www.tenderwizard.in/ISRO.

Sd/- ग्रुप निदेशक, सीएमजी, वीएसएससी / Group Director, CMG, VSSC

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CIN: U40109WB2007SGC113473, www.wbsedcl.in

WBSEDCL invites e-Tender as follows:

NIT No.: WBSEDCL/RE/RDSS/2023-24/NIeT/01**Date:** 20.04.2023 of the **Chief Engineer (RE), WBSEDCL**. **Estimated Cost:** ₹2656,54,97,347.40 for the work of 'Development of Distribution Infrastructure for Loss Reduction in Seven (07) Districts in West Bengal under Revamped Reforms-Based and Results-Linked, Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS) to be executed in **Turnkey** mode under the Open Competitive Bidding'.

For details, visit **https://wbtenders.gov.in** & **www.wbsedcl.in**
ICA- T8294(4)/2023

KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION e-TENDER

ABRIDGED NIT

The **D.G. (TP & DD), KMC** invites e-tender/quotation online expression of interest of lower bidder for following work:

NIT No.: **KMC/D.G.(TP_DD)/14-1/2023-2024 (2nd Call)**
Name of work: **Up-gradation and refurbishment of Brick Sewer by de-silting and GRP lining along Raja Dinendra Street in Br-II, IV, V and VII area.** Estimated Value: **Tender amount to be quoted by the bidder**. Earnest Money: ₹ **2,80,00,000.00**. Period of Completion: **36 months**. Last date and time of submission of bid: **26.05.2023 at 3 p.m.** Bid submission start date (online) on **26.04.2023 (3 p.m.).** The bid forms and other details are available on and from **26.04.2023 (3 p.m.)** from the website **https://etender.wb.nic.in**

59/23-24

राजस्थान सरकार
कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग वृत अलवर
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फोन - 0144-2737038, E-mail:-sealw.pwd@rajasthan.gov.in
क्रमांक : 5507 दिनांक : 31.03.2023

NIT No 43/2022-23

Bids for annual Rate Contract Budget announcement No 94/2023-24 Sanction works at Nagarpalika/ Nagarnigam for Majer Road work reparing for in 19 Package are invited from interested bidder from 05-04-2023 04:00 PM upto 25-04-2023 03:00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in and http://sppp.raj.nic.in of the state and http://pwd.rajasthan.gov.in departmental website. The approximate value of the procurements is 4400/- Lacs. (12 Package)
UBN No:

1. PWD2324WSOB00290	2. PWD2324WSOB00291	3. PWD2324WSOB00292
4. PWD2324WSOB00293	5. PWD2324WSOB00294	6. PWD2324WSOB00295
7. PWD2324WSOB00296	8. PWD2324WSOB00297	9. PWD2324WSOB00298
10. PWD2324WSOB00299	11. PWD2324WSOB00300	12. PWD2324WSOB00301

Superintending Engineer
PWD Circle Alwar
DIPR/C/5399/23

राजस्थान सरकार
कार्यालय जिला कलक्टर झुंझुनूं
क्रमांकःएफ.9(1)लेखा/टेण्डर/2023-24/117 दिनांकः 18.04.2023

निविदा सूचना

इस जिले में दिनांक 24.04.2023 से 30.06.2023 तक स्थाई महंगाई राहत कैम्पों का आयोजन किया जाना है। महंगाई राहत कैम्पों में फर्नीचर/ लेपटॉप/ प्रिंटर/ स्टेशनरी इत्यादि की व्यवस्था हेतु इच्छुक आपूर्तिकर्ता फर्मों से ई-बिड आमंत्रित की जाती है। बिड को https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in अथवा https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in से दिनांक 21.04.2023 को 10.00 एएम तक डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है।

UBN No.- CJN2324SLOB00002, NIB No.- CJN2324A0002
DIPR/C/5664/2023
अति.जिला कलक्टर, झुंझुनूं

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NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Tender No.	Material Description	Due date
232413 000556	Procurement of Plastic Core plug 90 GMS for Unit - I & Unit - II	04.05.2023
232423 000179	Heavy Duty LDPE Shrink Film of various sizes for TNPL Unit-II	05.05.2023
232423 000180	Cationic Polyelectrolyte for ETP process of TNPL Unit-II	04.05.2023
232423 000181	Native Starch (Maize based) for TNPL Unit-II	05.05.2023
232423 000182	Lubricant for TNPL Unit-II	11.05.2023
232423 000183	Cross Linker for TNPL Unit-II	12.05.2023
232423 000184	OBA (Slurry/Liquid) for coating (VAP) for TNPL Unit-II	04.05.2023
232423 000185	Bentonite for TNPL Unit-II	15.05.2023
232423 000186	Carboxy Methyl Cellulose (CMC) Powder Form for TNPL Unit-II	16.05.2023
232423 000187	Pigment Dye - Violet (Wet end) for TNPL Unit-II	06.05.2023
232423 000188	CPAM (Powder / Liquid) for TNPL Unit-II	08.05.2023
E-Mail	232413000556-purchase.packing@tnpl.co.in 232423000179-purchasepacking.u2@tnpl.co.in 232423000180; 0181; 0182; 0183; 0184; 0185; 0186; 0187 & 0188-purchaserm.u2@tnpl.co.in	

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website & NIC Portal only. Detailed requirements, Period, Terms & conditions, Tender fee, EMD, etc., are available in tender document at our websites: **www.tnpl.com/ www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app**

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INBRIEF

States asked to keep strict vigil on COVID-19 cases

P.K. Mishra, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, chaired a high-level meeting on Wednesday to assess the COVID-19 situation in the country, with a focus on preparedness of health infrastructure and the steps necessary to respond to the recent surge in cases. Rajesh Bhushan, Health Secretary, said the country has been witnessing a rapid increase in the number of cases, with the majority of cases being reported in eight States (Kerala, Delhi, Maharashtra, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Rajasthan). He advised officials to maintain a watch on the situation and follow the strategy of test, track, treat, vaccinate and follow COVID-appropriate behaviour.

Minority Commission says Dalai Lama's video 'tampered'

The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) on Wednesday said that the Dalai Lama was "not an ordinary human being but the living Buddha of the 21st century". Condemning a controversial video clip of the Buddhist monk with a child, the NCM said that the video was "tampered" and was part of a "disinformation campaign" against a holy person that hurt the sentiments of Buddhists. NCM members said that a "foreign power" was behind the tampered clip and that they would write to the Union government to conduct an inquiry and block such tampered videos being shared on the Internet.

Shah to chair SCO meeting to discuss emergency situations

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will chair a meeting of heads of departments of member-states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), dealing with Prevention and Elimination of Emergency Situations on Thursday. Mr. Shah would hold bilateral meetings on the sidelines with the Ministers of some of the SCO member-states, a Ministry statement said. During the meeting, the delegates will share information relating to the large-scale emergency situations which occurred in their respective territories and the measures taken to handle them.

Air India pilot unions threaten stir over revised wage norms

In its first major labour challenge since privatisation, two unions representing Air India pilots have threatened to strike work over the revised terms of employment and salaries announced by the airline earlier this week. The Indian Commercial Pilots Association representing Air India's narrow-body aircraft pilots, and the Indian Pilots Guild, which comprises pilots from its wide-body fleet, have written to Air India's CEO Campbell Wilson opposing the airline's revision of terms of employment. In a joint letter, they have warned the airline against its attempts to break the unions, saying the effort amounts to unfair labour practices.

UGC places emphasis on education in local language

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman M. Jagadesh Kumar has written to the Vice-Chancellors of all universities to implement teaching in local languages in higher education institutions.

He asked them to allow students to write examinations in local languages even if the programme is offered in English. He said translation of original writing in local languages and the use of local languages in the teaching-learning process at universities should also be promoted.

He asked the Vice-Chancellors to furnish a discipline-wise list of textbooks, reference books or study material available in local languages. He urged them to present a list of main topics or courses for which textbooks, reference books or study materials had to be be written or translated into local languages so that the work could be undertaken.

The UGC Chairman sought to know the availability of subject experts and scholars who could write or translate textbooks in local languages. He said in the letter that the promotion of Indian languages in education was a crucial area of focus in the National Education Policy, 2020.

He said the academic ecosystem, however, continued to be English-medium centric.

Union Cabinet gives nod for ₹6,003 crore Quantum Mission

Quantum computers can work several times faster than the speediest machines of today and facilitate secure communication networks

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

> Four thematic hubs will be set up in top academic and national research and development institutes to focus on the generation of new knowledge
>
> **JITENDRA SINGH**
> Science Minister

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the ₹6,003 crore National Quantum Mission (NQM) that will fund research and development of quantum computing technology and associated applications.

Quantum computers are a work in progress globally and exploit properties of the atom, which are only explainable by the principles of quantum mechanics.

The promise is a reliable class of computers that work several times faster than the speediest machines of today and also facilitate exponentially secure communication networks, with wide applications.

The mission was budgeted for ₹8,000 crore in the Union Budget of 2023.

The plan involves developing "intermediate scale" quantum computers with 20-50 physical 'qubits' in three years, 50-100 physical qubits in five years and 50-1,000 physical qubits in eight years. Just like bits (1 and 0) are the basic units by which computers process information, 'qubits' or 'quantum bits' are the units of process by quantum computers.

Other ambitions include developing "...satellite-based secure quantum communications between ground stations over a range of 2,000 kilometres within India, long distance secure quantum communications with other countries, inter-city quantum key distribution over 2,000 km as well as multi-node quantum network with quantum memories are also some of the deliverables of the mission," a press statement by the Science and Technology Ministry, which has administrative charge of the project, said.

Navigation systems

The mission will help develop magnetometers with high sensitivity in atomic systems, atomic clocks for precision timing, communications and navigation. Fabrication of quantum materials such as superconductors, novel semiconductor structures, and topological materials for fabrication of quantum devices.

"Four Thematic Hubs (T-Hubs) would be set up in top academic and National R&D institutes on the domains of 'quantum computing', 'quantum communication', 'quantum sensing and metrology' and 'quantum materials and devices'. The hubs will focus on the generation of new knowledge through basic and applied research as well as promote R&D in areas that are mandated to them," Science Minister Jitendra Singh said on Wednesday, explaining the policy.

"Only six countries so far have some capability in this domain. This mission will bring India to the forefront along with them, and India can be a world leader," he added.

Flying ban on unruly passengers should be left to airlines: AI CEO

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Campbell Wilson

Airlines in India should have the power to ban an unruly passenger unilaterally as in other countries instead of following a complicated process, Air India chief executive officer Campbell Wilson says. He asks why the police have not yet taken action against a male passenger who brutally punched a member of the cabin crew and grabbed another by her hair aboard the airline's Delhi-London flight last week.

"At the moment, there is a very convoluted process to make a determination on whether an airline should accept someone who has misbehaved for travel. In most other jurisdictions, that is left at the airline's discretion," Mr. Wilson said in an exclusive interview to *The Hindu*. He called the process defined by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) an "onerous" one.

"It's not conducive to sending the message that there is an expected level of behaviour and decorum on board an aircraft," Mr. Wilson said.

He expressed "shock" that there were frequent incidents of passengers not just turning up drunk but also bringing their own alcohol and drinking it secretly.

The DGCA's rules on handling of unruly passengers require an airline to constitute an internal committee comprising a retired District and Sessions Judge as chairperson, a representative from a different airline, and either a representative from a passenger's association or a retired officer of a Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum. The committee has 30 days to give its decision, though in the interim, the airline can impose a ban on the passenger for not more than 30 days.

The DGCA imposed a penalty of ₹30 lakh on Air India in January after the airline failed to report that a heavily inebriated passenger urinated on a woman co-passenger. There was a delay in forming the internal committee.

Mr. Wilson said the airports in Delhi and Mumbai needed better resources to ensure that it did not take airline crew half a day to file a complaint after 10 to 12 hours of flight. Last year alone has seen a total of 63 persons put on the "no fly list" by airlines, according to government data provided to Parliament.

FSSAI needs an energy shot to regulate processed food

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The social media influencer drawn into the Cadbury's Bournvita controversy has a supporter. The Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest – India (NAPi), a think tank working on nutrition policy, has issued a statement saying it stands by him.

Revant Himatsingka, who calls himself @foodpharmer on social media, with 1,35,000 followers on Instagram, drew the ire of Mondelez India, the company that owns Bournvita, with his April 1 video in which he flagged the product's high sugar content. He, however, deleted the video following a legal notice from the company on April 13. He has also apologised on his Instagram handle, while his Twitter handle has been suspended.

In January, the NAPi said that a Bournvita advertisement and product packaging was misleading and did not disclose the sugar content. The organisation has filed a formal complaint with the Department of Consumers Affairs, working under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution. It alleges the ads violate the provision of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

However, this has brought to the boil the real issue at hand – the Food Standards and Safety Authority of India (FSSAI) dragging its feet over implementing its own guidelines to regulate packaged and processed food.

On the cover: The FSSAI has been discussing labelling to indicate if the product is high in fat, sugar and salt. ISTOCKPHOTO

Labelling on front

The FSSAI has been discussing the possibility of front-of-pack labelling. According to this, brands would need to put a notification indicating if a food product was high in fat, sugar, and salt (HFSS). The labelling would allow consumers to make informed choices.

In September 2022, the statutory body had issued a draft notification on front-of-package labelling that proposed "Indian Nutrition Rating" (INR). The health star-rating system for packaged foods will assign half a star (least healthy) to five stars (healthiest) depending on the ingredients and the degree of processing.

Dr. Arun Gupta, paediatrician and NAPi convener, said the FSSAI has not been at the forefront of implementing its regulations. "Stars are a method to reward, and they should not be used. An upfront warning that a product is high in sugar content is required," he said.

In a statement, Mondelez India said, "Every serving of 20 grams of Bournvita has 7.5 g of added sugar, which is approximately a teaspoon and a half. This is much less than the daily recommended intake limits of sugar for children."

In 2020, the FSSAI looked into 1,306 product samples across 30 food companies, including dairy, confectionery, sweets and snacks. None complied with its threshold for sugar to avoid warning labels – 6 g per 100 g.

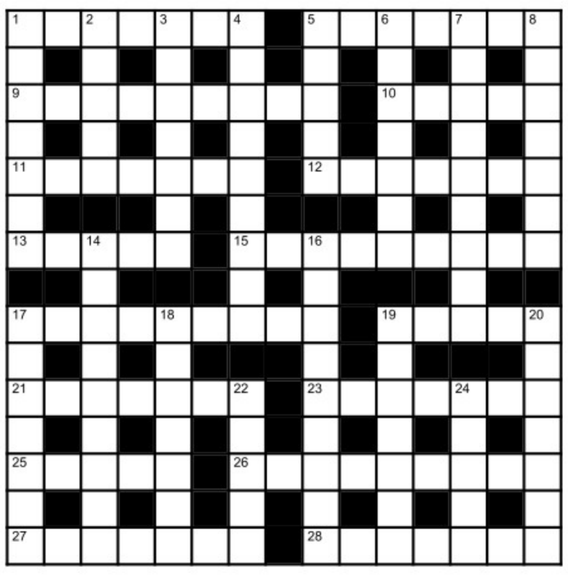
A panel then proposed increasing the threshold arbitrarily by six times. Despite that, only 20% of products were found to be meeting the new threshold – 36 g of sugar per 100 g. The rest had over 36 g of sugar, a source in the technical expert committee constituted by the FSSAI told *The Hindu*. The panel was later dissolved.

TH CROSSWORD + 13844

(set by Afterdark)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 True, one is missing peace and freedom... (7)
5 ..save partner (7)
9 Assured criminal flinched as per report (9)
10 Steal primarily expensive, superb costumes (5)
11 Unfair and imperfect... (7)
12 ...southern man with everyone wasted half beer becoming meaner (7)
13 Dishonest ruler almost eviscerated dynasty (5)
15 Being old lover is distraught, so to speak (9)
17 Cool drink brand with thrust as per report, sensational (9)
19 Musical work over ages... (5)
21 ...been around girl in hourly productions (7)
23 English politician with hesitation takes gold of king (7)
25 Lender in Dayun clearly hoarding (5)
26 Paying attention to record, ending with taking out date (9)
27 Call and speak to... (7)
28 ...person under doubt on damaging space-suit, the best is missing (7)

Down

1 Instructions are precise? It's all over the place (7)
2 Mad man kills jerk, primarily relating to moon (5)
3 Sharpness, if boy and girl are swapped can become competence (7)
4 Once jail department was first-class (9)
5 Conceals husband's papers with evilness heartlessly... (5)
6 ...with crooked veteran's (lacking empathy primarily) help (7)
7 Vehicle at ambush can't keep quiet carrying a weapon (9)
8 Be worthy of daughter, last wife, get present (7)
14 Reported that jittery nun in canoe capsized and died (9)
16 Popular line, leading song proliferates (9)
17 Restless, four am and lady enters. That's the way (7)
18 Maybe have ice, finish (7)
19 Work on media, harass (7)
20 Mostly everyone has privilege. OK? (7)
22 Last deputy speaks when leader is absent, shouts (5)
24 Go up carrying adult in lift (5)

SUDOKU

4		5	8					
	7	3	6	5	1			
5		4	2		6			9
		7				6		
6			5		4	8		7
			3	2	5	7	8	
					8	2		1

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

B	B	T	S	F	D	F	A	
A	M	E	R	I	C	A	A	P
E	R	I	E	S	R	N	R	P
N	I	N	G	R	O	U	P	T
O	R	P	E	D	O	U	A	H
A	A	T	N	M	E	L	O	D
I	O	U	S	C	I	R	C	A
E	T	T	A	N	S	I	R	O
C	C	O	S	H	O	T	P	U
T	U	E	E	V	R	G	E	N
I	I	E	X	C	I	S	I	O
N	S	A	O	V	R	A	U	P
R	E	V	E	A	L	S	S	C
R	A	T	C	H	I	A	B	I
T	O	S	E	N	E	T	T	L
E	D	L	O	W	G	E	A	R
G	E	E	E	E	S	T		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	1	6	4	9	7	2	5	3
5	7	4	8	3	2	1	6	9
9	3	2	5	1	6	4	8	7
3	6	5	9	2	1	8	7	4
7	2	1	3	8	4	6	9	5
4	8	9	6	7	5	3	1	2
1	4	8	2	5	9	7	3	6
6	5	7	1	4	3	9	2	8
2	9	3	7	6	8	5	4	1

FAITH

Caring for the Supreme

One of the fundamentals of Sanathana Dharma is the worship of the Omniscient, the Omnipresent, every day. Elaborate rituals may be condensed if one is pressed for time due to external factors. However, a devotee should always follow the basic daily rituals of worship. These include praying at home or in a temple every day; preparing and offering prasad to the presiding deity. Our scriptures say if one were to offer water and tulsi leaves to God with a pure heart and deep devotion, that in itself is acceptable to Him. However, one should undertake such acts with full humility, faith and devotion, said Thirukkudanthai Dr. Venkatesh in a discourse.

The efficacy of such dedication is best exemplified by Nadathur Ammal. His birth name was Varadaguru. He followed the daily ritual of reciting prayers from scriptures at the Varadarajaperumal Temple in Kanchi. One day Varadaguru saw the priest offering steaming hot milk to the deity. Unable to bear the thought of the hot milk being offered to God, he rebuked the priest for making such steaming, hot offering . The learned priest retorted, "Agni itself emanates from the tongue of the Omnipresent. How will heat affect Him?" Varadaguru, who was cooling the milk, said, "He is our Protector and He is all-Knowing, Yet, when He comes amidst us and resides here, we should take care of Him as we would a new born baby. That is the mark of true devotion." The cooled milk was offered to Varadaraja, and a voice said, "Amma". "Everyone treated Me as Aththi Varada, only you have shown Me the love and care a mother would bestow on a child. May you be known as Nadathur Ammal from now on."

SEOUL

Kim Jong-un says North Korea's first spy satellite is ready for launch

AFP

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said his country had built its first-ever military spy satellite and that he planned to launch it on an undisclosed date. During his visit to the country's aerospace agency, Mr. Kim said that having a reconnaissance satellite was crucial for North Korea to use its nuclear-capable missiles. AP

TEHRAN

Iran's Supreme Leader rules out referendums on divisive issues

AFP

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ruled out the holding of popular referendums on state policies. During a meeting with students, he rejected the idea saying, 'Where in the world is this done?' He appeared to be referring to remarks by former President Hassan Rouhani, a relative moderate, who had mooted the plan. AP

BANGKOK

Panda loaned by China to Thailand as part of a diplomacy plan dead

AP

A giant panda on loan from China to Thailand who captivated animal lovers through a 24-hour live broadcast of her antics died aged 21. The notoriously sex-shy Lin Hui and her mate Chuang Chuang — who died of a heart attack in 2019 — were part of Beijing's so-called "panda diplomacy" programme. AFP

SÉLESTAT

Macron booed by angry French after signing pensions reform

AFP

French President Emmanuel Macron was loudly booed by crowds in eastern France as he embarked on his first trip out of Paris since signing his unpopular pensions reform into law. He had been encouraged by allies to get out and meet voters after signing the reform, with some fearing he was becoming too reclusive. AFP

Kremlin critic loses appeal in case related to war remarks

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Kremlin critic Ilya Yashin on Wednesday lost an appeal against what his supporters say was a politically motivated decision to jail him for eight-and-a-half years for criticising Moscow's assault on Ukraine.

Mr. Yashin said he had been put behind bars for "speaking the truth" over Moscow's actions in Ukraine and Russia.

"The sentence delivered against me is amazing: eight and a half years for a 20-minute speech on the Internet," he said.

Last year, Mr. Yashin described the murder of Ukrainian civilians in Bucha as a "massacre", referring to a town where civilians were found killed after Russian forces pulled back.

No respite in Sudan as battles continue after truce breaks

UN estimates put casualties at 300 but toll likely to be higher as many bodies are left on streets; residents flee Khartoum after the failure of a 24-hour ceasefire despite pressure from U.S., others

Associated Press
KHARTOUM

Terrified Sudanese who have been trapped for days in their homes by fighting in the capital of Khartoum fled on Wednesday, hauling out whatever belongings they could carry and trying to get out of the city, after an internationally brokered truce failed and rival forces battled in the streets for a fifth day.

The swift failure of the 24-hour cease-fire, despite pressure from the U.S. and regional powers, suggested that Sudan's two top generals were determined to crush each other in a potentially prolonged fight for control of the country.

Faith first: People gather for a meal to break their fast at sunset during the month of Ramzan in Port Sudan on Tuesday. AFP

The generals' fight for power has caught millions of Sudanese in the crossfire, as their forces have battled it out since Saturday in the residential neighborhoods of Khartoum, its neighboring city Omdurman and other major towns of the country.

Nearly 300 people were killed in the past five days, the UN health agency said, but the toll is likely higher since many bodies were left in the streets.

A 24-hour cease-fire was to have been in effect from sundown on Tuesday to sundown on Wednesday. But fighting continued after the intended start of the truce and through the night.

Soldiers flee to Chad

Around 320 Sudanese soldiers have fled the fighting raging in their country to neighbouring Chad, the country's defence minister said Wednesday.

"They arrived in our territory, were disarmed and detained" on Sunday, General Daoud Yaya Brahim told a press conference, saying the troops feared being killed by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) battling those of army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

Fox News avoids trial, to pay $787.5 mn in defamation case

Agence France-Presse
WILMINGTON

Fox News reached a $787.5 million settlement on Tuesday in a defamation case brought by voting technology company Dominion that alleged the network knowingly aired false claims linking its machines to a conspiracy to undermine the 2020 U.S. election.

The agreement to end the case avoided what most experts suggested would have been a damaging, high-profile trial for the conservative channel in which owner Rupert Murdoch would have been compelled to testify in open court.

Fox News said it was "pleased" to have ended the dispute and added: "We acknowledge the court's rulings finding certain claims about Dominion to be false."

Victors' march: Attorneys for Dominion Voting Systems exit a court in Delaware after the settling of the lawsuit on Tuesday. AP

Dominion CEO John Poulos told reporters outside the court that *Fox* had "admitted to telling lies about Dominion that caused enormous damage to my company, our employees, and our customers."

The proceedings had been due to test the limits of free speech rights for media in America when wilfully broadcasting misinformation.

Anchors save face

The settlement, believed to be one of the largest in a defamation case ever, means star anchors, such as Tucker Carlson and Sean Hannity will also avoid appearing on the witness stand.

Kyiv receives Patriot missiles made by U.S.

Associated Press
KYIV

Ukraine's Defence Minister said on Wednesday his country has received the U.S.-made Patriot surface-to-air guided missile systems it has long craved and which Kyiv hopes will help shield it from Russian airstrikes during the war.

Ukrainian officials have previously said the arrival of Patriot systems would be a major boost and a milestone in the war against Moscow's full-scale invasion. It's the latest contribution from Kyiv's Western allies, who have also pledged tanks, artillery and some types of fighter jets as Ukraine gears up for an expected counteroffensive.

Beijing hospital fire death toll rises to 29

Agence France-Presse
BEIJING

Chinese authorities said on Wednesday they had detained a dozen people over a hospital fire in Beijing that left at least 29 dead and forced desperate survivors to jump out of windows to escape.

The blaze, which broke out on Tuesday afternoon at the Changfeng Hospital in China's capital, killed mostly patients, and left scores of other people injured.

Dramatic footage posted to social media showed people clinging to ropes and jumping from the building, while others perched on external air conditioning units in a desperate bid to shelter from the flames.

Conservationists in Sri Lanka slam plan to export monkeys to China

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Zoologists and conservationists in Sri Lanka on Wednesday slammed a recent government proposal exploring the export of monkeys to China, terming it an ad-hoc, illegal, and short-sighted response to a long-standing human-animal conflict.

Earlier this month, Minister of Agriculture Mahinda Amaraweera said the government was studying a proposal from a Chinese company to purchase Sri Lankan toque macaques, a golden brown-coloured monkey endemic to the country.

The Chinese firm, said to be an animal breeding company according to Sri Lankan portal *Newswire*, had written to the Ministry, making an offer to buy "a large quantity of monkeys" from Sri Lanka, as the island nation was reportedly looking to "get rid of certain crop-destroying species". Local media reports said authorities were considering exporting about 1,00,000 monkeys.

Stopgap measure: Activists fear that the monkeys, allegedly causing crop damage, could end up in testing laboratories. ISTOCK

Sri Lanka's farmers have been voicing concern over crop damage and consequent financial losses, owing to frequent attacks by monkeys in their areas. However, the government's announcement came abruptly, the conservationists told a media conference in Colombo, adding that farmers had not demanded such an "ad-hoc" solution.

Even as environmental groups in Sri Lanka raised alarm over the Minister's remarks, Sri Lanka's Cabinet spokesman recently said the government was yet to hold a discussion on the subject.

Testing labs

Further, the conservationists said they were worried that the monkeys could end up in testing laboratories abroad. "If the monkeys are exported to Chinese labs [as some reports claim], they would be tested, and their skin and eyes could be burnt. They will effectively be tortured and killed," said Panchali Panapitiya, an animal rights activist from the non-profit Rally for Animal Rights and Environment (RARE).

Challenging the official estimates of 3 million toque macaques, Sri Lanka-based primatologist Wolfgang Dittus said that in 1977, when a large-scale enumeration was undertaken, Sri Lanka had about 6,00,000 toque macaques. "Since then, their natural habitat [forest cover] has decreased by 50 to 70 % and that would mean that the monkey population has also dropped, because their existence depends on their natural habitat. So, my estimation is that Sri Lanka currently has about 3,00,000 toque macaques. They are an endangered species," he said.

"We fully sympathise with the farmers and the point is to reduce the conflict between monkeys and humans. We can't change monkey behaviour, but feeding monkeys at temples, or poor management of garbage are serious problems we need to address."

1% of Indians take home 22% of the country's income.

1% of Indians account for 45% of all flights.

3% of Indians make up all unique credit card holders.

2.6% of Indians invest in mutual funds.

8% of Indian households constitute 100% car ownership.

6.5% of Indian users account for about 44% of UPI transactions.

5% of Indian users account for about 33% of orders placed on Zomato.

7.4% of urban Indians read an English newspaper.

Do the math. Thank You.

Hindustan Times | THE HINDU | The Telegraph | THE TIMES OF INDIA

All data presented sourced from The Indus Valley Report, 2023 by Blume Ventures (bit.ly/indusvalley2023). Total Readership data is based on IRS Q4, 2019.

INBRIEF

Mankind Pharma announces up to ₹4,326-cr. offer-for-sale

Mankind Pharma Ltd. has announced an offer-for-sale (OFS) of 40,058,844 equity shares in the price band of ₹1,026 to ₹1,080 per equity shares with face value of ₹1 each. The initial public offer (IPO) will open on Tuesday, April 25, 2023 and the issue will close on Thursday, April 27, 2023. The size of the IPO is estimated at ₹4,326 crore at the upper price band. Bids can be made for a minimum of 13 equity shares and in multiples of 13 shares thereafter.

'NMDC exploring Australian lithium reserves for mining'

NMDC is exploring lithium reserves, 124.3 miles off Perth, Australia, company officials said on Wednesday. "We are in the process of exploring (lithium) in Australia," D.K. Mohanty, director production, NMDC, told reporters on the sidelines of an industry conference in Mumbai. NMDC is the majority owner of a mine in Mt Bevan in Australia, a second NMDC official said, adding that the company hoped to start mining within two years. REUTERS

Cholamandalam Investment to raise ₹5 billion via NCDs

Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company plans to raise at least ₹5 billion through the public issue of non-convertible debentures (NCDs), as per a product note. The issue will open for subscription on Tuesday and close on May 9. The issue also has a greenshoe option to retain an additional ₹5 billion. Proceeds will be used for onward lending, financing, and repayment of interest and principal of existing borrowings, among other purposes. REUTERS

'Home loan enquiries slow, youth seek unsecured credit'

Demand for unsecured lending products is rising, driven by the adoption of consumption-led credit products, says credit information company Transunion Cibil

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Home loans, the mainstay of retail lending, witnessed a dip in demand in the December quarter, credit information company (CIC) Transunion Cibil said on Wednesday.

However, there has been a 'marked increase' in demand for credit cards and personal loans, which constitute the unsecured loans portfolio for banks, the company said.

Demand for unsecured lending products is being driven by the adoption of consumption-led credit products, the CIC said.

Flip in patterns

There has been a 'marked increase' in demand for credit cards and personal loans

- 'Below prime consumers' saw a 4 percentage point increase to 40% in the December quarter compared with the same period a year earlier
- Young consumers now account for a major share of the demand for loans
- 43% of enquiries for loans were by people in the 18-30 years age range compared with 40% a year earlier and 36% in the December 2020 quarter

Enquiry volumes for home loans for the quarter ended December 2022 were 1% lower than the year-earlier period, while that for personal loans and credit cards shot up by 50% and 77%, respectively.

The period saw a surge in interest rates, which has led to concerns over the impact on home loans that are longer term in nature.

The CIC said young consumers now accounted for a major share of the demand for loans, pointing out that 43% of the enquiries were by people in the 18-30 years age range compared with 40% in a year earlier and 36% in the December 2020 quarter.

BEML Land Assets gets listed post spin-off

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

BEML Land Assets Ltd. (BLAL), the subsidiary of public sector undertaking Bharat Earth Movers Ltd. (BEML), on Wednesday got listed on the BSE at ₹290.20 a share but closed with a loss of 5% at ₹275.70.

BHEL had hived off its land holdings and non-core surplus assets into this subsidiary as part of its strategy to unlock value. The subsidiary has 550 acres of land in Bengaluru and Mysore. The company also has 36,592 sq. ft of commercial land including freeholds and leaseholds.

Govt. brings back windfall tax on oil

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The government has brought back the windfall profit tax on domestic crude oil after international prices firmed up while the levy on export of diesel has been cut to nil, according to an official order. The levy on crude oil is now ₹6,400 per tonne.

In the last revision on April 4, windfall tax on domestic crude oil was cut to nil as international oil prices dipped below $75 per barrel. However, oil prices have shot up this month following a surprise cut in production announced by OPEC and its allies like Russia.

Alongside, the government cut the tax on the export of diesel to nil from ₹0.50 per litre.

Commenting on the move, Prashant Vasisht, vice president at ICRA Ltd, said, "There was a moderation in crude oil prices in March 2023; hence, the special additional excise duty (SAED) was reduced to nil on April 04, 2023."

"However, crude oil prices jumped 9% to around $85 per barrel post OPEC+ announcement of production cuts," he added. ICRA expects government collections from the same to be around ₹15,000 crore for FY24.

Tata's JLR to invest €15 bn to light up electric-vehicle foray

Reuters
LONDON

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) will invest €15 billion ($19 billion) over the next five years in electric vehicles (EVs) and promised to deliver a new electric Jaguar in 2025 as the British luxury carmaker plays catch-up with rivals.

JLR, owned by Tata Motors, said in 2021 Jaguar would be entirely electric from 2025, but on Wednesday could not confirm when production of its fossil-fuel models would end.

The carmaker previously said it would invest £2.5 billion a year on electrification. The pressure on carmakers to electrify quickly is picking up, especially in China where the competition is moving faster and the pressure to cut prices is getting more intense.

Premium German rivals Mercedes and BMW have already rolled out a number of electric models.

JLR introduced its well-received electric I-Pace in 2018, but has since not unveiled any other zero-emission models.

The carmaker said its Halewood plant in northwest England would become an all-electric manufacturing facility.

EV battery unit

JLR also said it was targeting a double-digit margin for earnings before interest and taxes by 2026.

Tatas are also considering building an EV battery plant in Spain or Britain, a source has told Reuters, which would supply JLR.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	59,568	-0.27
US Dollar	82.25	-0.25
Gold	59,940	-0.59
Brent oil	82.95	-2.62

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	1853.85	2.90
Adani Ports	658.40	-0.15
Apollo Hosp	4320.30	-18.35
Asian Paints	2809.70	-44.90
Axis Bank	873.40	10.05
Bajaj Auto	4265.80	56.55
Bajaj Finserv	1331.35	-3.85
Bajaj Finance	5947.75	32.10
Bharti Airtel	764.65	4.90
BPCL	342.00	7.20
Britannia Ind	4293.85	-8.00
Cipla	911.90	-12.35
Coal India	230.40	-1.80
Divis Lab	3342.60	72.00
Dr Reddys Lab	4909.35	-3.05
Eicher Motors	3289.60	26.05
Grasim Ind	1690.10	-14.85
HCL Tech	1038.70	-25.15
HDFC	2744.80	21.10
HDFC Bank	1665.70	6.10
HDFC Life	524.80	-7.50
Hero MotoCorp	2445.95	6.25
Hindalco	433.05	1.50
Hind Unilever	2531.60	-9.45
ICICI Bank	891.90	-4.95
IndusInd Bank	1120.40	-26.50
Infosys	1232.20	-27.15
ITC	398.75	0.25
JSW Steel	722.35	3.00
Kotak Bank	1884.90	-3.40
L&T	2219.60	3.00
M&M	1215.50	10.80
Maruti Suzuki	8679.95	-52.70
NestleIndia	20618.70	-42.55
NTPC	167.10	-3.00
ONGC	160.10	0.00
PowerGrid Corp	229.95	-0.35
Reliance Ind	2352.00	11.65
SBI Life	1123.40	-22.15
State Bank	540.30	-5.55
Sun Pharma	995.50	-9.30
TataConsumerProduct	700.85	-6.20
Tata Motors	469.40	-3.60
Tata Steel	108.10	0.50
TCS	3089.60	-41.15
Tech Mahindra	1013.90	-11.30
Titan	2569.30	-8.40
UltraTech Cement	7515.90	-79.40
UPL	735.95	-2.70
Wipro	360.80	-7.10

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on April 19

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	82.03	82.35
Euro	89.70	90.09
British Pound	101.90	102.30
Japanese Yen (100)	60.82	61.06
Chinese Yuan	11.90	11.95
Swiss Franc	91.18	91.54
Singapore Dollar	61.33	61.58
Canadian Dollar	61.01	61.28
Malaysian Ringitt	18.50	18.58
Australian Dollar	54.93	55.20

Source:Indian Bank

Raymond eyes up to 25% export growth

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Raymond Ltd., which is into lifestyle and real estate businesses, is eyeing up to 25% growth in exports, according to CMD Gautam Hari Singhania.

"Exports are doing well," he said. "I think exports will grow over 20 to 25% because the China plus-one strategy is working out. People have realised they cannot have all the eggs in the China basket because if China goes into any volatile situation tomorrow, they will be forced to pull out."

Raymond exports garments and fabrics to major markets such as the U.S., Europe and Japan. On domestic operations, he said since the Indian economy is doing well, any firm which is into the affordable luxury space seems to be doing well. "So, in lifestyle [garments & fabrics], we are hoping to do well because of the upcoming wedding season."

He said lifestyle and real estate business would grow at the rate of "at least double [that] of inflation."

"If you see the last five quarters, we have delivered five, very solid, quarters of results," he added.

Price cuts fail to prime Netflix income

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In December 2021, Netflix cut its prices, with its mobile plan price set at ₹149 and its single-screen Basic plan slashed from ₹500 to ₹199. The impact, according to data disclosed by the firm, may be somewhat limited, reflecting the issues faced by global streaming brands in a competitive OTT streaming industry, even when they bend to price-sensitivity pressures.

On a foreign exchange-neutral basis, revenue growth in India stood at 19% in 2021, and after the price cut, rose to 24% in 2022, the firm said in its letter to shareholders for January-March 2023.

In spite of the price cut, the company only managed a 5 percentage point rise in revenue growth.

This is notable considering Netflix is nowhere near saturation of the streaming market in India.

It is not clear if the price cut aided the increase in subscribers, or if the growth was a natural outcome of the brand's marketing and its organic evolution. A Netflix spokesperson refused to comment beyond Tuesday's financial filings.

Alliance plans ₹21,600-crore worth projects in 3 big cities

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Real estate developer Alliance Group said it had lined up a series of new offerings across Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad to develop projects in FY24 at an investment of ₹21,600 crore.

According to the expansion plan, Alliance Group said, it aims to develop 10 million sq. ft of residential spaces in Bengaluru with an investment of ₹6,800 crore, followed by 16 million sq. ft in Chennai (₹8,900 crore) and 10 million sq. ft in Hyderabad (₹5,900 crore).

Steel PLI scheme to attract ₹30,000-cr. investment: Scindia

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Steel Jyotiraditya M. Scindia on Wednesday said that the ministry has signed 57 MoUs with 27 companies for specialty steel under the PLI scheme, which is expected to generate investment of about ₹30,000 crore and create additional capacity of about 25 metric tonne in the next five years.

This, he said, will create more than 60,000 jobs and help India to become the third-largest economy by 2030-31.

Addressing the "India Steel 2023" conference, Mr. Scindia said, "We have emerged as the second-largest steel producer in the world with per capita steel consumption going up from 57 kilos to 78 kilos during the last nine years."

Jyotiraditya Scindia

Faggan Singh Kulaste, Minister of State in the Ministry of Steel and Rural Development, said, "In 2013-14, steel production capacity was about 100 million tonnes and crude steel production was about 82 million tonnes, whereas in 2022-23 the steel production capacity increased to 154 million tonnes and crude steel production to 125 million tonnes."

"This historic growth has been possible due to the business-friendly policy, reforms and transparency in the steel sector," he said.

He said the Vehicle Scrappage Policy for circular economy will help the steel industry to get maximum scrap.

"This policy will also be helpful in the production of green steel," the Minister of State said.

CAUTION PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client Mr. Jasjiv Sahney would like to inform the General Public that he is intending to purchase the Schedule Property from its owner Mr. N.S. Venkatesh Babu S/o Late Srinivas Murthy, residing at Sri Murthy Departments, No. 404, Sampige Road, 8th Cross, Malleswaram, Bengaluru-560 003 and had in pursuance thereto entered into an agreement on 06.06.2022 for a valuable consideration and the same is valid and in force.

Any transaction entered into by any other person in respect of the Schedule Property shall be subject to our client's rights in the said property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the land bearing Survey No. 5/3 (Old Survey No.5) measuring 2 Acres 12 Guntas excluding 2 Guntas of Kharab situated at Lingadeeragollahalli Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk and bounded on the:

East by : Land bearing Survey No.6 and S.G. Nagaraj's Land; **West by :** Land bearing Survey No.5/2; **North by :** Government Road; **South by :** Government Road.

Mr. Varun Pai, Advocate
AKS LAW ASSOCIATES
301, Sunrise Chambers, Ulsoor Road, Bengaluru 560042.
April 20, 2023, Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Chidananda Murthy R/a 174/2, A.S.B. Farm, Kadabagere, Dasanapura Hobli, Bangalore Rural , Karnataka – 562130, do hereby solemnly affirm and take oath as that earlier in my Son's Aadhaar Card , Birth Certificate registration his name mentioned as Jayanandan G.C. But as per School records his true, correct and continue his name as **Shobit G.C.(New Name)** only in all his future records, deeds, writings, proceedings, transactions private as well as upon all occasions whatsoever vide affidavit sworn before Advocate and Notary Devaraja .E. on 15.04.2023.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public are hereby informed that my clients intend to purchase the property morefully described in the schedule hereunder from its present owner, **MRS.PADMA BANDOPADHYAY,** aged about 78 years, wife of late Dr.Satinath Bandopadhyay, residing at No. B-83, Sector Alpha -1, Kasana, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-201310 she having acquired title to the same under a Gift Deed dated 29.03.2023 which was registered as Document No.GNR-1-06545/2022-2023 in Book I, stored in CD No.GNRD1235 at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Gandhinagar (Ganganagar), Bengaluru.

All persons/firms/companies/banks/financial institutions having or claiming any right, title, estate or interest by way of inheritance, share, sale, mortgage, transfer, lease, tenancy, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, devise, bequest, exchange, pre-emption, possession or encumbrance or otherwise howsoever into or upon the Schedule Property herein below described, are called upon to intimate the same in writing to the undersigned, at the below given address, along with all the documents relating to such claim, within **14 days** from the date of publication of this notice, failing which any such claim of any party shall be deemed to have been waived for all legal practical purposes, and shall not be entertained hereafter and I shall opine that the Schedule Property is free of any claims and my clients will be free to proceed with the proposed purchase of the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL of property bearing **Municipal No.417 (Property ID No. 97-3-417)** 2nd Block, Matadahalli Extension presently known as 2nd Block, R T Nagar, Bengaluru formed by the Bangalore Development Authority, measuring East to West: 18.29 mtrs and North to South: 12.19 mtrs, totally measuring **222.96 sq. mtrs** together with a residential building standing thereon consisting of ground floor and one room on the first floor totally measuring 1240 sq ft. and bounded on the:-

East by : Site No. 414
West by : Road
North by : Site No.418
South by : Site No. 416

Vivek Anand Anthony Britto
Vir Anthony Britto
Advocates
"Daisville", 633, 5th Main, Indiranagar II Stage, Bengaluru-560038
Place: Bengaluru Date: 19.04.2023

ODISHA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
Regd. Office: Janpath, Bhubaneswar-751022
CIN:U40102OR2004SGC007553

TENDER ALERT

1)E-Tender Notice No.Telecom-03/2022-23: Engineering, Supply and erection (stringing) of OPGW and Accessories in the existing EHV, 132kV Joda-Rourkela line of OPTCL under CGM (Telecom), OPTCL Hqrs.

2)E-Tender Call Notice No.CPC-04/2023-24: Engineering, Supply, erection, Testing and commissioning for diversion of 132kV D/C Lapanga-Brajarajnagar Line, 220kV D/C Aditya Aluminium-Budhipadar Line & diversion-cum-heightening of 400kV D/C IB-Lapanga Line from proposed Power plant & Ash Pond area of M/S NLC at Thelkoloi, Sambalpur.

For more details please visit: **www.tenderwizard.com/OPTCL** and OPTCL's official website: **www.optcl.co.in.**

HIPR-05/2023-24
CAD-245 OIPR-04011/11/0014/2324

ELECTRONICS CORPORATION OF TAMIL NADU LIMITED
CHENNAI - 35 (ELCOT)

TENDER NOTICE
ELCOT invites bids for supply of the following tender

Tender No.	ELCOT/Proc/OT/33687/Procurement of DMR/2022-23
Tender Details	Supply of Digital Mobile Radios with complete accessories for the Police Department
Tender Submission Due date and Time	**23.05.2023 @ 03.00 PM**
Tender Opening Date & Time	**23.05.2023 @ 04.00 PM**
Earnest Money Deposit	**Rs.25,00,000/-**
e-Portal Charges	**Rs.11,800/-**

The Bidders may download the tender documents, help documents and user manuals from **https://tntenders.gov.in**

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
ELECTRONICS CORPORATION OF TAMIL NADU
692, II Floor, M.H.U. Complex, Anna Salai,
Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035
e-mail : md@elcot.in URL : www.elcot.in

DIPR/2217/TENDER/2023

" சோதனை கடந்து சுதந்திரம் அடைந்தோம் சாதனை புரிந்து சரித்திரம் படைப்போம் "

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, V SRINIVASA, R/at 469 Rampura Bang –49 have changed my name from SREENIVASA VENKATAGIRIYAPPA to V SRINIVASA for all future purposes by affidavit dated 11–04–2023, Notary B.Seshagiri.

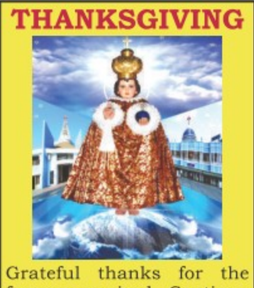
I, JANICE Joseph, S/o Joseph John, R/a No.301, 3rd Floor, Block No.2, BN Wisdom Tree Community, Hennur, K.Narayanapura, Dr.SRK Nagar Post, Bangalore, Karnataka-560077 have changed my name to Janice Joseph John vide affidavit dt: 17.04.2023 sworn before Notary D.Rajanna, B'lore.

I, SEKAR, S/o. V. Selvaraj, R/o. No.87 Goshen, Shanthiniketa Layout, Virgo Nagar, Bengaluru- 560049, have changed my name from Sekar to S. Sekar (i.e. Sekar Selvaraj), vide affidavit, dated: 18/04/2023, sworn before Notary Public, K.H. Jagadish, Bangalore.

I, BERYL, W/o. S. Sekar, R/o. No.87 Goshen, Shanthiniketa Layout, Virgo Nagar, Bengaluru- 560049, have changed my name from Beryl to E. Beryl (i.e. Beryl Ernest), vide affidavit, dated: 18/04/2023, sworn before Notary Public, K.H. Jagadish, Bangalore.

THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING



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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SURESH Anathi Shivanna, S/o. A. Shivanna, R/o. No.137, 7th Main, 8th Cross, Bhuvaneshwari Nagar, T.Dasarahalli, Bengaluru- 560057, have changed my name from Suresh Anathi Shivanna to Suresha Anathi Shivanna, vide affidavit, dated: 19/04/2023, sworn before Notary Public, K.H. Jagadish, Bangalore.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Unconditional Public Apology by Lalit Kumar Modi

I hereby tender this unconditional public apology for my social media post, dated 13.01.2023, and my tweet dated 30.03.2023. I reiterate that I have the highest regard for the Indian Judicial System and the majesty of the Hon'ble Courts, and I will not do anything which is inconsistent with the majesty or dignity of the Hon'ble Courts or the Indian Judiciary, in any manner. I reiterate that I do not, and did not, have the remotest intention of denigrating or lowering the Indian Judiciary's image or public estimation, which I hold in the highest regard and esteem.

Sd.
Lalit K. Modi
2, Belgrave Square
London, SW1X8PH

DESPERATE TIMES

Delhi Capitals forced to call up Abhimanyu and Garg for trials

Delhi Capitals on Wednesday summoned the uncapped duo of Abhimanyu Easwaran and Priyam Garg for trials. Such has been the form of Prithvi Shaw, Yash Dhull and Lalit Yadav that the Capitals management has been forced to look at players such as Abhimanyu who are considered red-ball specialists.

NEW MILESTONE

Ishan Kishan completes 4,000 runs in T20 cricket

India and Mumbai Indians wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan completed 4,000 runs in T20 cricket in the IPL match against Sunrisers Hyderabad on Tuesday. In 156 T20 matches so far, Kishan has scored 4,007 runs at an average of 28.82 and a strike rate of 130.43. He has three centuries and 22 half-centuries to his name.

CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK

Arjun Tendulkar has his father's temperament, says Gavaskar

Spotting similarities between Arjun Tendulkar and his legendary father Sachin, Sunil Gavaskar has termed the junior Tendulkar as a thinking cricketer. "Sachin Tendulkar's temperament was absolutely amazing and Arjun seems to have inherited that. He seems to be a shrewd thinker as well," said Gavaskar.

CLARIFICATION

Siraj reported bookie incident during India's NZ tour, not IPL: ACU

Contrary to reports that Mohd. Siraj was approached by a man from Hyderabad to pass on 'team information' during the IPL, sources in BCCI's Anti Corruption Unit confirmed to *Sportstar* that the incident happened during India's tour of New Zealand last year, and not during the ongoing IPL.

Super Giants win by 10 runs in a last-over thriller against Royals

Superb spells from Stoinis and Avesh see the home team fumble in what looked like an easy chase after Jaiswal and Buttler put on 87 for the first wicket; Mayers and skipper Rahul come good with the bat for the Lucknow side with an 82-run opening stand

IPL-16

Pranay Rajiv
JAIPUR

Lucknow Super Giants overcame Rajasthan Royals by 10 runs in a last-over thriller in the Indian Premier League at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium here on Wednesday.

Royals looked well in control for most of the game, before LSG fought back in the middle overs of the home side's chase to ensure a first victory over its opponent for the night.

Marcus Stoinis (two for 28) and Avesh Khan (three for 25) were the pick of the bowlers for LSG, with the latter defending 19 off the last over as Royals fumbled in what looked like an easy chase.

Royals' openers Jos Buttler (40) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (44) started sedately, before the latter waded into Yudhvir Singh in the third over, scoring a six and a four.

Jaiswal was the first to fall after he guided a Stoinis delivery into the hands of Avesh at short third man. Skipper Sanju Samson quickly followed the opener back into the hut following a run out.

All-round show: After contributing a valuable 21 to boost Super Giants' total, Stoinis accounted for the Royals' openers. SPORTZPICS/IPL

Uncharacteristic knock

Buttler's uncharacteristically slow knock came to an end after he mistimed a Stoinis delivery straight to Ravi Bishnoi at deep mid-wicket. The dangerous Shimron Hetmyer (two) fell early to Avesh as LSG inched its way back into the game.

Riyan Parag (15 not out) and Devdutt Padikkal (26) were left with too much to do in the death as LSG bowlers delivered.

Earlier, the Royals' bowling unit was at its restrictive best as it contained the Lucknow Super Giants batters to 154 after winning the toss.

LSG openers – K.L. Rahul (39) and Kyle Mayers (51) – found it hard to get going against some incisive new ball bowling from Trent Boult (one for 16), who started with a maiden against the LSG skipper.

R. Ashwin (two for 23) controlled the game for Royals in the middle overs. None of the LSG batters found it comfortable against the wily Ashwin, who kept things tight with his accurate bowling.

The 36-year-old conceded just six runs in the 18th over against Marcus Stoinis (21) and Nicholas Pooran (29).

Pooran, though, provided the late flourish to push his side to what would prove to be a match-winning total.

SCOREBOARD

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
K.L. Rahul c Buttler b Holder 39 *(32b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Kyle Mayers b Ashwin 51 *(42b, 4x4, 3x6)*, Ayush Badoni b Boult 1 *(4b)*, Deepak Hooda c Hetmyer b Ashwin 2 *(4b)*, Marcus Stoinis c Samson b Sandeep 21 *(16b, 2x4)*, Nicholas Pooran run out 29 *(20b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Krunal Pandya (not out) 4 *(2b, 1x4)*, Yudhvir Singh run out 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-4, w-1, nb-1): 6; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 154.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-82 (Rahul, 10.4 overs), 2-85 (Badoni, 11.4), 3-99 (Hooda, 13.2), 4-104 (Mayers, 13.5), 5-149 (Stoinis, 19.3), 6-153 (Pooran, 19.5), 7-154 (Yudhvir, 19.6).

ROYALS BOWLING
Boult 4-1-16-1, Sandeep 4-0-32-1, Ashwin 4-0-23-2, Chahal 4-0-41-0, Holder 4-0-38-1.

RAJASTHAN ROYALS
Yashasvi Jaiswal c Avesh b Stoinis 44 *(35b, 4x4, 2x6)*, Jos Buttler c Bishnoi b Stoinis 40 *(41b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Sanju Samson run out 2 *(4b)*, Devdutt Padikkal **(Impact Player in place of Chahal)** c Pooran b Avesh 26 *(21b, 4x4)*, Shimron Hetmyer c Rahul b Avesh 2 *(5b)*, Riyan Parag (not out) 15 *(12b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Dhruv Jurel c Hooda b Avesh 0 *(1b)*, R. Ashwin (not out) 3 *(2b)*; Extras (b-1, lb-4, w-6, nb-1): 12; Total (for six wkts. in 20 overs): 144.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-87 (Jaiswal, 11.3), 2-93 (Samson, 12.4), 3-97 (Buttler, 13.3), 4-104 (Hetmyer, 15.1), 5-141 (Padikkal, 19.3), 6-141 (Jurel, 19.4).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Naveen-ul-Haq 4-0-19-0, Yudhvir 2-0-27-0, Avesh 4-0-25-3, Stoinis 4-0-28-2, Bishnoi 4-0-25-0, Mishra **(Impact Player in place of Mayers)** 2-0-15-0.

Toss: RR. **MoM:** Stoinis.
Super Giants won by 10 runs.

Next assignment

LSG: April 22 **vs. GT**
Lucknow, 3.30 p.m.

RR: April 23 **vs. RCB**
Bengaluru, 3.30 p.m.

Tilak elated about doing well at home

V.V. Subrahmanyam
HYDERABAD

"Stay focussed. Don't think too much. Have a calm head whether you are scoring runs or not. But, always give 100%." Tilak Varma, the exciting batting talent of Mumbai Indians, reveals that this was the mantra of Sachin Tendulkar and captain Rohit Sharma.

The 20-year-old Tilak, who played his first IPL game at home against Sunrisers Hyderabad (34, 17b, 2x4, 4x6) on Tuesday, said the team management always backed him.

"They never treated me like a youngster and I too never felt like one even in my first season last year. It is such a great feeling to be part of a team which has the God of Cricket (Sachin) and the Indian captain (Rohit Sharma). I am always confident in the team," Tilak revealed. "Never felt playing like IPL or any other big event," he added.

On the biggest challenge during the rehab programme after suffering an injury before coming back straight into IPL, Tilak said he was always mentally focussed, got the basics right to be ready for the challenges. He showcased his skills against SRH with some clean hits over the fence too.

Sunrisers head coach Brian Lara said his team tried to stay in the game throughout but lost wickets consistently throughout the chase. "We need to have guys who can finish the games like Tewatia, Miller" he said.

"Good opportunity to learn. I felt today they played better cricket and came on top," Lara said.

Points Table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Rajasthan Royals	6	4	2	8	1.043
Lucknow Super Giants	6	4	2	8	0.709
Chennai Super Kings	5	3	2	6	0.265
Gujarat Titans	5	3	2	6	0.192
Punjab Kings	5	3	2	6	-0.109
Mumbai Indians	5	3	2	6	-0.164
Kolkata Knight Riders	5	2	3	4	0.320
Royal Challengers Bangalore	5	2	3	4	-0.318
Sunrisers Hyderabad	5	2	3	4	-0.798
Delhi Capitals	5	0	5	0	-1.488

After the RR-LSG match on April 19

Dhawan set to miss another game, Livingstone could play

Shayan Acharya
MOHALI

Shikhar Dhawan is likely to miss Punjab Kings' crucial Indian Premier League (IPL) fixture against Royal Challengers Bangalore on Thursday as he continues his recovery from a shoulder injury.

Dhawan underwent a fitness test during the Kings' training session on the eve of the match. But bowling coach Charl Langeveldt said Dhawan "was not there yet" and that "it would take a while" for him to be a 100% fit.

Meanwhile, Langeveldt revealed that Liam Livingstone, who arrived in the country over a week ago but is yet to play a game, will be available for selection.

The Liam option: Punjab could strengthen its line-up by including Livingstone in the playing XI. SPORTZPICS/IPL

Contrasting fortunes

The teams come into the game with contrasting fortunes. While Royal Challengers Bangalore lost a close battle with Chennai Super Kings, Punjab Kings beat know Super Giants.

It will be interesting to see how Arshdeep Singh, Kagiso Rabada and stand-in captain Sam Curran tackle the RCB batters.

The RCB openers – captain Faf du Plessis and Virat Kohli – and No. 4 Glenn Maxwell are the big names at the top but have blown hot and cold.

Mohammed Siraj, Harshal Patel and Wayne Parnell provide teeth to the bowling attack.

The presence of Josh Hazlewood, once he is back from rehabilitation, will be a boost.

RCB is eighth with four points from five matches, and is up against a PBKS side that has beaten it five times in the last six meetings.

There is a chance of rain on Thursday, but with Kohli around, fans are expected to throng the stadium in numbers.

Today's matches

Mohali, 3.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD	
Played: 30	
PBKS 17	RCB 13

PREVIOUS MEETING: PBKS won by **54 runs**, 2022

Delhi, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD	
Played: 30	
DC 14	KKR 16

PREVIOUS MEETING: DC won by **four wickets**, 2022

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA APP

DC hopes to give home fans some cheer but KKR has the edge

Rakesh Rao
NEW DELHI

Delhi Capitals, which has lost all its five matches so far, will be desperate to open its account by handing out Kolkata Knight Riders a third successive defeat this season when the teams meet in the IPL here on Thursday.

For KKR, after Rinku Singh smashed five sixes in the final over to script the most-talked about victory of this year's edition, nothing went right against Sunrisers Hyderabad and Mumbai Indians.

Placed seventh with four points from five matches, KKR would look to stretch Capitals' string of defeats.

Facing an uphill task of staying in contention for the playoffs, Capitals has to tick too many boxes to get out of the cellar. Off-form Prithvi Shaw and Mitchell Marsh are required to fire before it is too late. After all, for Marsh's all-round capabilities, Capitals bid ₹6.50 crore. Another huge disappointment has been Khaleel Ahmed, bought for ₹5.25 crore.

Seeking a turnaround: Marsh, bought by Capitals for a huge sum, has been a disappointment so far. R.V. MOORTHY

The consistent late-order contributions have made up for the inconsistency of the top-order, but not enough to change the Capitals' fortunes.

Among the bowlers, left-arm pacer Mustafizur Rahman has proved too expensive to be of any support to Anrich Nortje. The spin of Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel and Lalit Yadav has been fairly effective. However, the bowlers have conceded too many during Power-Play and the last five overs.

KKR, clearly a more balanced side, has less concerns. Despite the luxury of seven bowling options, the poor economy rates of Umesh Yadav and Shardul Thakur need attention.

On the brighter side, Venkatesh Iyer's return to form with a century augurs well. Overall, KKR appears to have the edge.

Star player: Gil slotted in four for NorthEast United. K. RAGESH

Gil show takes NEUFC to the semifinals

SUPER CUP

P.K. Ajith Kumar
KOZHIKODE

On a dramatic final night of the league matches, North-East United had the last laugh. That was mostly due to one man: Wilmar Jordan Gil, who scored four of his team's goals in the 6-3 win against Churchill Brothers on Wednesday.

The victory earned NorthEast the last semifinal berth of the Super Cup. In the other Group D match, Mumbai City defeated Chennaiyin FC 1-0 through the first-half goal by Ayush Chhikara.

That meant NorthEast and Mumbai finished with six points apiece. The tie was broken by the head-to-head record: NorthEast had beaten Mumbai 2-1 four days ago. Chennaiyin took the third place in the group, with four points, while Churchill finished with just one.

The Gil show began with a splendid long-ranger that stormed past a diving Churchill goalkeeper Nora Fernandes.

There was no stopping Gil after that.

In the semifinals, Bengaluru FC will take on Jamshedpur FC here on April 21 and NorthEast will meet Odisha FC at Manjeri on April 22.

The results:
NorthEast United 6 (Wilmar Jordan Gil 27, 43, 51 & 70, Gani Nigam 78, M.S. Jithin 90+1) bt Churchill Brothers 3 (Kingslee Fernandes 55, Martin Chavez 60, T.V. Mohammed Irshad 83-og). Mumbai City 1 (Ayush Chhikara 33) bt Chennaiyin FC 0.

INBRIEF

World chess championship resumes with Nepo ahead

The World chess championship resumes at Astana, Kazakshtan, on Thursday, after a day's break, with the match interestingly placed. Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi is leading 4-3 against Ding Liren of China. Nepomniachtchi, who suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Magnus Carlsen in the last World title match in 2021, took the lead for the third time when he won the seventh game on Wednesday.

Federation Cup volleyball in Karaikal from Thursday

The 36th Federation Cup volleyball tournament will be held in Karaikal from April 20 to 26. The participating teams in men's section are defending champion Haryana, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Services, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Punjab, Indian Railways and host Puducherry. In the women's section, defending champion Indian Railways, Kerala, Rajasthan, West Bengal and Puducherry will take part.

Rashford returns to training, gives United welcome boost

Marcus Rashford has returned to training for Manchester United, giving the club a major boost ahead of the second leg of its Europa League quarterfinal against Sevilla on Thursday. The England international, who has scored a career-high 28 goals this season, suffered a groin strain in a 2-0 win over Everton on April 8.

KSFA to conduct entrance exam for referees on May 14

The Referees Committee of Karnataka State Football Association will conduct an entrance exam for referees on May 14 at the Bangalore Football Stadium. In this regard, classes will be held from May 11 to 13. Those interested can register at *www.the-aiff.com*. For details, call Stanley (8660621556 / 9535379025).

EUROPA LEAGUE FIXTURES

Quarterfinals (second leg)

In Seville: Sevilla vs Manchester United (2-2).

In Lisbon: Sporting vs Juventus (0-1).

In Brussels: Union Saint-Gilloise vs Bayer Leverkusen (1-1);

In Rome: Roma vs Feyenoord (0-1).

LIVE TELECAST

NBA: MTV, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 a.m.

World Chess championship: FIDE & Chess.com YouTube channels, 2.30 p.m. onwards

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 3.30 & 7.30 p.m.

Pakistan vs New Zealand: 4th T20I, Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 9.30 p.m.

Europa League: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Friday).

Rodrygo's brace helps Real sink Chelsea, cruise into semis

Despite a 1-1 stalemate at Napoli, AC Milan rides on Giroud's strike and aggregate success to enter the last-four stage for the first time in 16 years

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Reuters
LONDON

Double delight: Real Madrid's Rodrygo slides the ball past Chelsea 'keeper Arrizabalaga for both his and the team's second goal. AP

Defending champion Real Madrid breezed past Chelsea into the semifinals of the Champions League with Rodrygo's double securing a 2-0 win at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday for a 4-0 aggregate victory that sets up a likely mouth-watering clash with Manchester City.

In the other quarterfinal played on Tuesday, AC Milan reached the last four for the first time in 16 years, after surviving a barrage of pressure at Napoli, thanks to a first-half goal from Olivier Giroud that secured a 1-1 draw and 2-1 aggregate success.

Milan will face either Inter Milan or Portuguese side Benfica in the last four.

Missed chances

Trailing 2-0 from last week's clash in the Bernabeu, Chelsea had its moments but failed to take its chances in the opening half and at the start of the second and was made to pay as Rodrygo sent the silky Spaniards through. He opened the scoring in the 58th minute and tapped in again in the 80th to spark a mass exodus of Chelsea fans. N'Golo Kante had twice come close to cutting the deficit and Real's former Chelsea keeper Thibaut Courtois made a crucial save just before halftime to frustrate his old club.

And when Rodrygo finished off a sweeping counter-attack there was no way back for the London club which has lost all four games since Frank Lampard returned as interim manager.

The closing stages were almost academic and Real turned on the style with Federico Valverde teeing up Rodrygo's second.

Meanwhile in Naples, the host battled until the end but could not break down the resilient Milan defence until Victor Osimhen equalised three minutes into stoppage time with a bullet header but it was too late as the referee ended the match seconds later.

Going ahead

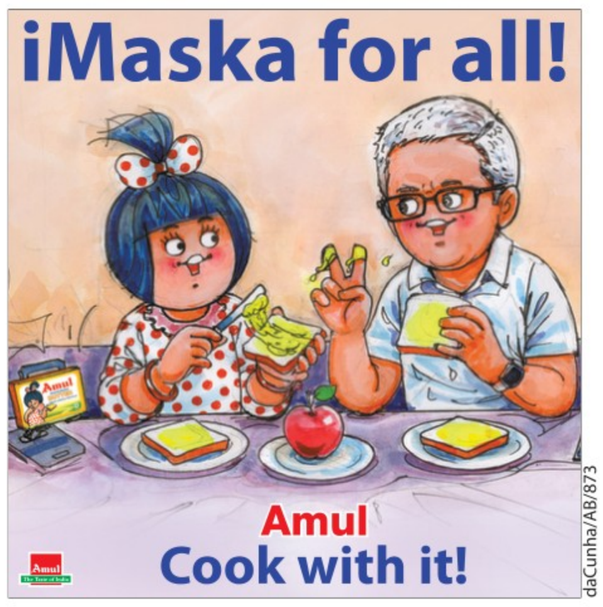
After Milan won 1-0 in the first leg, Napoli pushed for the opening goal from the start as the visitors were forced to defend deep. As a result of the intense pressure exerted by the hosts, Milan were able to exploit the holes in the home defence and went ahead through Giroud just before halftime.

Rafael Leao sprinted with the ball from his own half past the Napoli defence before rolling it across to Giroud who slotted home from close range.

Osimhen was shackled all night until his added-time header but it came too late for Napoli and their disappointed fans.

The results (quarterfinals, second leg): Napoli 1 (Osimhen 90+3) drew with AC Milan 1 (Giroud 43). *AC Milan won 2-1 on aggregate.*

Chelsea 0 lost to Real Madrid 2 (Rodrygo 58, 80). *Real Madrid won 4-0 on aggregate.*



Suryakumar stays on top of T20I rankings

Press Trust of India
DUBAI

Suryakumar. FILE PHOTO

Suryakumar Yadav continued his stay at the the top of the latest ICC Men's T20I Batters rankings released on Wednesday.

Suryakumar remained static on the ICC list with 906 rating points, and is over a 100 points ahead of the second placed Mohammad Rizwan (798) of Pakistan.

Virat Kohli is the next best Indian batter on the list as he remained static on 15.

Among bowlers, left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh is the top-ranked Indian on 14th, while Bhuvneshwar Kumar has dropped down a spot to 19.

Hardik Pandya is second in the all-rounders' list, behind leader Shakib Al Hasan.

Warner makes WTC final and Ashes squads; Marsh, Harris and Renshaw back

Reuters
SYDNEY

Warner. FILE PHOTO

David Warner was included in Australia's squad for the World Test Championship (WTC) final and first two Ashes Tests but selectors kept their options at the top of the batting order open by also calling up Marcus Harris and Matt Renshaw.

Under pressure

Warner has been under pressure after a poor run of form with the bat but returned after injury to the 17-man squad for the WTC final against India at The Oval and the tests against England that follow at Edgbaston and Lord's.

The 36-year-old, whose tour of India was cut short by an elbow injury, will need to work his way out of a form slump that has seen him post only one century, albeit a double, in more than three years.

"He's invested and wants to make sure that we finish off what's been a really consistent couple of years on the Test front and help us win that World Test Championship, then shift that focus to the Ashes," head selector George Bailey told reporters.

Harris has not played a Test since the last Ashes series in 2021-22 after his place as Warner's opening partner was taken by Usman Khawaja, while Renshaw beat out the in-form Cameron Bancroft for the other batting spot covering the top order.

Injury-plagued all-rounder Mitchell Marsh returned to the test squad for the first time since the 2019 Ashes series as backup to Cameron Green, while uncapped English-born wicketkeeper Josh Inglis was also included.

Batsman Peter Handscomb, all-rounder Ashton Agar, and spinners Mitchell Swepson and Matt Kuhnemann were the players dropped from the squad that toured India in February and March.

Despite the different conditions expected in England, off spinner Todd Murphy retained his spot in the squad as backup to Nathan Lyon after excelling in his first four tests in India.

The squad: Pat Cummins (Capt.), Scott Boland, Alex Carey, Cameron Green, Marcus Harris, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Mitch Marsh, Todd Murphy, Matthew Renshaw, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc and David Warner.

Atanu Das claims fourth spot

ARCHERY

Sports Bureau

Making a fine return to international outdoor competition after nearly one-and-a-half years, Olympian Atanu Das scored 673 points to claim the fourth spot in recurve men's individual rankings at the Archery World Cup Stage-1 in Antalya on Wednesday.

Atanu, who collected 338 in the first half of his round followed by 335, scored 310 through 10s and Xs.

He was followed by B. Dhiraj (665), Tarundeep Rai (662) and Neeraj Chauhan (639) at 15th, 23rd and 90th places respectively.

The Indian men's team was fourth with 2000 points. Bhajan Kaur, who gathered 648 to place 32nd, was the best among the Indian women. Simranjeet Kaur (644), Ankita Bhakat (642) and Aditi Jaiswal (637) claimed 41st, 46th and 56th slots respectively.

The women's team was 11th with 1934 points.

The Indian mixed team was also 11th with 1321 points. After getting a bye, the top-ranked Indian compound women's team, comprising V. Jyothi Surekha, Aditi Swami and Avneet Kaur, lost 225-233 to eighth-ranked USA in the elimination phase.

The sixth-positioned Indian compound men's side, which enjoyed a bye, also crashed out in the second round, losing 234-236 to 11th-placed Chinese Taipei.

Sathiyan stops Sharath to help ONGC retain title; IOC women make it past OIL

Reign continues: The victorious ONGC and Indian Oil squads. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

TABLE TENNIS

Rakesh Rao
NEW DELHI

As widely anticipated, ONGC men and Indian Oil women retained the team titles in the Petroleum inter-unit table tennis tournament at the Indira Gandhi Stadium on Wednesday.

In the men's team final, where rivals G. Sathiyan and Sharath Kamal lost their opening singles, ONGC managed to continue its dominance of arch-rival Indian Oil. After Harmeet Desai defeated Sharath to put ONGC ahead and Manav Thakkar made it 1-1 after stunning Sathiyan, former National champion A. Amalraj expectedly put ONGC back in the lead after scoring over B. Priyanuj.

Intense contest

This brought Sathiyan and Sharath face to face in the fourth singles. Having struggled for form, both players gave it all and eventually, Sathiyan prevailed 11-8, 5-11, 11-9, 11-7 to decide the title.

In the women's team final, Indian Oil overpowered Oil India 3-1 after Archana Kamath, Krittwika Sinha Roy and Reeth Rishya won a match each. However, the performer of the final was young Yashaswini Ghorpade who defeated Krittwika and Archana to keep OIL alive in the contest. Also creditable was the performance of the highly-experienced Mouma Das.

The results: Men: Final: ONGC bt Indian Oil 3-1 (Harmeet Desai bt Sharath Kamal 11-2, 10-12, 11-7, 11-2; G. Sathiyan lost to Manav Thakkar 7-11, 7-11, 10-12; A. Amalraj bt B. Priyanuj 12-10, 11-8, 11-6; Sathiyan bt Sharath 11-8, 5-11, 11-9, 11-7).

Third place: HPCL bt OIL 3-2.

Women: Final: Indian Oil bt Oil India 3-2 (Archana Kamath bt Mouma Das 11-5, 12-10, 7-11, 7-11, 11-6; Krittwika Sinha Roy lost to Yashaswini Ghorpade 12-10, 13-11, 2-11, 12-10; Reeth Rishya bt Trisha Gogoi 11-4, 8-11, 12-10, 11-5; Archana lost to Yashaswini 11-3, 7-11, 5-11, 11-8, 10-12; Krittwika bt Mouma 11-8, 13-11, 11-8).

Third place: ONGC bt HPCL 3-0.

India squad for South Asian under-12 tennis

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

The All India Tennis Association (AITA) has selected the boys' and girls' teams for the South Asian under-12 tennis tournament to be staged at the Sheikh Jamal National Tennis Complex, Dhaka, Bangladesh, from May 16 to 20.

Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, apart from host Bangladesh, will be the other teams.

Two teams will qualify for the Asian under-12 event to be staged in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan.

The teams:

Boys: Vivaan Mirdha, Smit Undre, Rishikesh Mane.

Coach: Indra Kumar Mahajan.

Girls: Karthika Padmakumar, Srishti Kiran, Niesha Enja.

Coach: Asha Sharma.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Pavandeep's 188 highlights Play Smart's massive win over RCA Mysore in Tiger Cup

R. Pavandeep smashed 188 as Play Smart thrashed RCA Mysore by a mammoth 328-run margin in the Tiger Cup U-12 cricket tournament here on Wednesday.

The scores:

Play Smart 447/5 in 30 overs (R. Pavandeep 188, Jaipreeth 52, Sohum Joshi 48, Sachith Shetty 36) bt RCA Mysore 119/8 in 30 overs.

KCC Gurukul 260/2 in 30 overs (Niraj 106, Vineet Patil 59, Deep 49) bt Tejal Shiraguppi CA 141/5 in 30 overs (Akshan 40, Samrat Aditya 26).

South Cricketers 242/3 in 30 overs (Jason 84, Akhilesh Pradhan 67, Kesaav Arun 35) bt Akshay Sports 179 in 29.4 overs (Sashang Sangeeta Rao 42, Karan Veer 33).

Rishanth and Harsha excedl in BIT's victory over SMVIT

Rishanth's half-century (69) and Harsha's four-wicket haul (4/23) were instrumental in BIT's 23-run win over SMVIT in the M.S. Ramaiah All India inter-engineering colleges cricket tournament here on Wednesday.

The scores:

GAT 185/7 in 27 overs (A.S. Yash 67, Vasanth 37, Vikas 3/42) bt CMRIT 121/9 in 27 overs (Abhivaviraj 48, Sai Teja 5/31).

BIT 183/7 in 29 overs (Rishanth 69, Dhavan 38) bt SMVIT 160/9 in 29 overs (Prathan 39, Harsha 4/23).

Mony and Rineeth make merry as BCYA-B steamrollers Samant Sports Academy

Mony Machaiah scored six goals and Rineeth Cariappa four as BCYA-B hammered Samant Sports Academy 11-0 in the Travancore Cup hockey tournament on Wednesday.

The results:

BCYA-B 11 (Mony Machaiah 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 34, Prabhu 5, Rineeth Cariappa 10, 13, 23, 24) bt Samant Sports Academy 0.

Ideal Sports Academy-B 6 (Hemanth 9, 13, 43, Hari 19, 26, 40) bt Leo's SC 0.

Prannoy and Sindhu to lead Indian team at Sudirman Cup

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

H.S. Prannoy and P.V. Sindhu will lead the Indian challenge at the 2023 Sudirman Cup, scheduled in Suzhou, China, from May 14 to 21.

India is in Group 'C' along with Malaysia, Chinese Taipei and Australia and its first task will be to make it to the knock-out stage.

The team: Men's singles: H.S. Prannoy; K. Srikanth (reserve: Lakshya Sen); **Doubles:** R. Satwiksairaj & Chirag Shetty; M.R. Arjun & Dhruv Kapila.

Women's singles: P.V. Sindhu; Anupama Upadhyaya (reserve: Aakarshi Kashyap).

Doubles: Gayatri Gopichand & Treesa Jolly; Ashwini Ponnappa & Tanisha Crasto.

Mixed doubles: Tanisha & Sai Pratheek.